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A jointly constructed social and personal endeavor, the notion of time offers a rich source of relatively untapped sociological insight. As the hallmark of American society's recent evolution, the context of intensified personal busyness and social acceleration asserts the relevance of temporal consideration. A primary conclusion from the review of relevant literature finds the need for research of temporality through the lens of personal, qualitative experience in supplement to commonly popular quantitative forms. Following the suggestion of a parallel shift between culturally oriented and subjectively experienced time, the equation of time to money bears particular interest as a powerful analogy underlying the notion of a quantified time, a concept providing a distilled form of the problem statement. The conceptual lens of "quality time" offers the supplemental, yet contrasting lens which provides the focus of these ideas into the development of this qualitative study.

Interviews conducted with students and professors aimed to invite the personal expressions of quality time as a facet of personal reconciliation with time. Data from fifteen interviews with students and professors intended to structure a template of comparison between generations, with additional relevance for the realm of higher education. Although the outcome of the data encouraged divergent avenues of analysis, the resultant discussion seeks to explore promising angles for the subjective experience of time, as counterpart to its social construction, and as a revealing field of sociological inquiry.

QUALITY TIME: AN EXPLORATION OF SUBJECTIVE TEMPORALITY

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The landscape of the world today is radically different from that of 60 years ago. The microcosmic realms of society, community, family, and individual, have witnessed drastic transformation. It is true that by itself, the observation of change across generations is neither original nor surprising. Yet, within its details awaits a messy wealth of intricacies about our worlds, our lives, and all the configurations between. It is from here that the call is made to step out of - or maybe further inside - the localness of our knowledge, to appreciate the gravity of implications therein. It is the humble goal of this study to portray a small slice of this significance.

Focusing in on the rate of change since mid-20th century, exponential is a quintessential descriptor. Skyrocketing possibilities for the realms of communication, information, and production have played significant contribution. The expansive potential of the Internet has fueled the exponential climb across the recent several decades, accelerating technological advancement and globalized possibilities to new heights and new reaches of influence. The steepness of its magnitude has condensed the progression of social change, bringing a phenomenon once covertly unfolding across generations into the much tighter frame of the life span. The force behind the speed of change has stripped it bare; *the acceleration has moved beyond attribute, to definition.*

The resultant frame of a seemingly faster, wireless, instant, 24/7 world, has affected not only perception of *it*, but the very experience of life. The jolt of speed reverberates the everyday. In many ways, increasing opportunities enrich the life of the individual. Cell phones, for example, have become a standard whose convenience and instantaneous capacities would not be easily given up by the majority who use them today over the land-line as a primary source of communication. A similarly low number would opt for waiting for the narrowed scope of the evening news or the morning's newspaper, sacrificing

finger-tip access to a much greater field of news and information. Most of us have likely found benefit in the relatively recent availability of 24 hour super-centers. And so on. Generations growing up today alongside the evolutions of new opportunities of technological portability, like the smart phone devices and tablet computers, will generate a new range of scenarios and abilities taken-for-granted, in turn generating fodder for the “when I was your age” hardship stories of their parents’ generation.

However, while perhaps generally a neutral phenomenon, the erosion of once standard temporal and spatial boundaries brings as many opportunities for negative consequences as it does positive benefits. While the breaking down of such boundaries allows for the instantaneity and flexibility that can be associated with innumerable freedoms, an emergent picture also casts the expanding realm of possibilities a recipe for overwork, overwhelm, saturation, and exhaustion. Americans in particular report being busier and feeling more rushed, stressed, anxious, and exhausted, than their counterparts in previous generations and in other countries around the world. Generally, the sentiment of having more to do and less time to do it captures an eminent characterization of American life.

At the daily level, the experience of acceleration easily lends to overload of: technology, media, information, and even personal availability. The context is a breeding ground for stressed-out, over-worked, over-scheduled, anxiety-laden, and attention-deficited individuals - both in work and personal life (lines which actually begin to disintegrate as a result). Fostering the expectation of instantaneity across platforms, acceleration further breeds the context of a quick-fix culture, potentially providing for an unhealthy cycle of stress compacting stress and/or, ironically, inertia compacting inertia.

The hazardous consequences of over-reliance on the quick-and-easy cover a vast range. From the well documented American over-reliance on processed/fast food, to the preference of instantaneous but pharmaceutically manufactured “solutions” to issues like obesity and anxiety (whose list of often-times potentially irreversible and even fatal dangers are almost arrogantly unworriedly verbalized by their own advertisers), slower-paced but more natural options like healthy home-cooked meals and exercise become too time-consuming.

The practice of slower values like delayed gratification risk endangerment. Although a simplified explanation, the combinations between stress, exhaustion, lethargy, and inertia on a personal level can aggregate to yield detachment and apathy at the levels of family, community, and even society. From personal health to the core of democratic functioning, sacrifices made towards the inescapably pervasive demand of keeping up bear heavy connotation.

Although myriad lenses can, and have been used in untangling the modern-day Western world, the poignant distinction of its seemingly faster, accelerated, sped-up, and busied pace, highlights the centrality of time. Resonance has cast the insignia across an array of angles, lenses, theses, and theories, generating such terms and concepts as time-poverty, time-scarcity, accelerated time, short-termism, short-term capital, overworking, multi-tasking, and type A personality, just to name a few. The significance of time to present-day culture has been cast in many formats, including the erosion of temporal boundaries, as well as the characterization of time as accelerated, discontinuous, fragmented, and/or compressed. Such concepts can be found in the details of post-modern flexibility, but also touted from the intensified drive of modernity. Bureaucratic, economic, consumerist, globalist, technological, cultural facets, and beyond, take turn focusing the picture. The characterization has been studied in many and not enough ways. Beneath them all runs the undercurrent of time.

Thus, as a significant piece in the unwinding dynamic between person and society, the temporal road to the place of current day presents a scope that can, and sociologically-speaking *should* - as its "public" birthright would remind us - be an opportunity to incite the imagination and dialogue necessary for a better tomorrow.

This current study intends to follow that theme of time. Taking a cue from the seminal work, "Bowling Alone," which framed the contextual significance of social evolution since mid-20th century, this study intends a similar (albeit admittedly less well-crafted) frame by focusing on this same general scope. A sentiment supported in the details of both these works, the significance of social-change across this

recent time-span is additionally heightened due to previously incomparable access to such in-depth longitudinal data.

This study further intends to share in the general premise of understanding today for the benefit of tomorrow. However, it diverges in that instead of an investigative approach concentrated on the decline of community and civic engagement, this study adopts the lens of time, and specifically, the subjective experience of time. This focus launches a select review of ideas, theories, and literatures from a vast array related to the notion of subjective temporality - to follow.

The details of the qualitative study born from these ideas will then follow this interdisciplinary overview. To pursue the concept of subjective temporality, interviews were conducted with 15 participants around this topic. With the intent to provide for considerations specific to comparison across generations, as well as the realm of academia, participants were sought from two main groups: students and professors. To focus the interview protocol as well as its results, the concept of “Quality Time” shaped this qualitative investigation and its analysis. The analysis of the results provides the bulk of this paper.

CHAPTER II

CHANGING TIMES: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE ON TIME

Across the various configurations presented through my readings on time, one analogy has particularly stayed with me: the parallel drawn between grasping sand and grasping at the concept of time. In either case, it seems the greater the effort, the more concrete substance lost.

I found myself recalling the equation throughout my attempts to navigate the literature on time in some logically comprehensive way. Growing more pronounced alongside the suspicion that every door closed merely led to another side of even more doors, the naiveté of that effort towards a logical, comprehensive route through the topic eventually gave way to the need for a realistically reconfigured plan. As the proportion of what i read continued to shrink in the growing shadow of what i felt needed reading, the motivation of an exhaustive understanding, became, just exhausting.

Following what often felt like nonlinear pathways through types and topics of literature concerning time, i began forming my own visual analogy for an ultimate end-product. I found this visualization forming around the notion of the masses of knowledge about time as literal masses of material available from which to sculpt something, and hopefully, something worth calling art. This became my personally defined process and effort – not to idolize the impossibility of crafting something definitive and total, but to do my best at conveying my own constellated pieces of that totality, and hopefully, in a way so refined as to add a few solid pieces for that larger impossible puzzle.

Without much more detail guiding my vision of an end-product, I relied on faith that my nearsightedness would ultimately find its way towards some semblance of an end, and that it would find its pieces fitting into some aesthetically recognizable form. I maintained faith that, from the end looking

backwards, the flow of the steps would show their own sense of logic after all. This faith was held nowhere more strongly than the messy depths which first insisted its necessity: the initial venture of the literature review. So, as I have gone back retrospectively and attempted to patchwork its pieces together, i hope i have succeeded in connecting at least a few dots in ways worth constellation-gazing.

Among the trials and errors of my personally referenced themes of organization, another phrase I found myself returning to was the description of “having more to do and less time.” After all, it was my own experiences as a graduate student, alongside observations of other students and professors, that first sparked my curiosity of a culture that seemed to both breed and normalize a seeming disease of chronic busyness. From fellow graduate students complainingly, yet almost competitively equating their monstrous work-loads to the crushing deaths of their personal and social lives, to a poignantly particular remembrance of a young professor who seemed to take some pride in explaining that after a few weeks of normalizing the range of two to five hours of sleep per night, that her body and mind had seemed to have just adjusted to perpetual tiredness (alongside the aid of diet coke). More and more, I felt something seemed very off about some of the ways people were relating to time.

Accordingly, I found that characterization of “more to do and less time” a suitable summary of the phenomenon which initially intrigued me. Relatedly, it also seemed to encapsulate the various pockets of literature on time which resonated with me most, despite the fact that I struggled initially with seeing some of the connections between them. I thus developed my literature review through splitting the phrase into two main headers: “More to do” and “Less time.” As an initial distinction, I found it helpful to discern between these main sections in considering the former as more a description of personal attribute, and the latter more a depiction of cultural context.¹ Each of these main sections is further broken down into two subcategories: first, a consideration of the topic quantitatively, and second,

¹ Yet, this represents an initial, superficial distinction as it is not exactly a steadfast rule. Ultimately, both topics deal with the implications of time on personal and societal levels, even though, each does have its own leaning of focus.

qualitatively. To provide a sense of forest before wading into the trees, an overviewed preview of the four subsections of the literature review follows, with main topics appearing in bold.

“More to do” opens with consideration of a relatively recent body of literature on time from the 1990s. This body of literature plays a suitable introduction in representing both the study of the busyness syndrome which first drew me to the topic, as well as a pivotal collection in solidifying the topic of time - and particularly its personal experience - as a significant social issue. The first and quantitative consideration of “more to do” reviews studies based around the quantified measure of personal use of time. This body of **time-use studies** represents the mainstay of the ‘90s literature on time. Juliet Schor’s *The Overworked American* was a forerunning title, asserting that Americans are increasingly spending more time working than the previous generations. This work served as a springboard for resulting themes of social inquiry based upon the study of time-use, with particular attention to time spent working and time available for other areas such as leisure, family, parenting, etc. Although the notion of such time-life balance issues particularly took off in the arena of family studies, the conviction of a “time-bind” was also later countered by opposing arguments.

The second and qualitative consideration of having “more to do” concerns the significance of that descriptor beyond the numerical framings of the clock. Honing in on **the social significance of busyness**, Jonathan Gershuny (2005) provides a framework for exploring the issue of personal busyness as more than just an exercise in numbers. His article “Busyness As the New Badge of Social Honor” outlines the three main considerations which structure this more qualitative consideration of having “more to do.”

The next section on “Less time” follows suit in its division of subtopics into quantitative and qualitative considerations. The first subtopic, “Quantitatively less” takes root in Marx’s notion of **the commodification of time** as one of the forerunning theories about how perception of time is quantified socially. It relays how the social intersections of time, labor, and economy configure in the context of industrialization and wage-labor to shape the perception of time in terms of ownership, necessarily turning time into a limited resource of restricted availability. In other words, by introducing the

perception of temporal ownership through an hourly-based wage, the notion of commodified time shows how the social quantification of time leads to the perception of less time. The second subcategory of this section, “Qualitatively less,” considers how **the phenomenon of social acceleration** can provide a social context in which time feels accelerated, and thus less accessible. Hartmut Rosa’s theory of social acceleration (2009) is summarized here to provide elaboration on this cyclical process where efforts towards “saving time” ultimately result in the exact opposite.²

More to Do

Quantitatively More

In the 1960s and 70s, regard for the temporal experience of the individual revolved around a curious concern. Government bodies, economists, and social scientists alike forecasted the “problem of time” as one imminently waiting on the horizons of the next decades. The problem was pinpointed as one of excess leisure. Projections conveyed a future context in which technological and social development would produce “time-saving” processes and devices, to the extent of successfully diminishing the necessary work-load of the individual. Though perhaps not the most scientific, the vision of the future à la *The Jetsons*’ – a three-hours-a-day/three-days-a-week work week, supplemented with a variety of roboticized daily routines – is actually a well-articulated example.

Thus, for researchers and analysts at the time, a primary concern questioned “What will people do with all that time?” (de Graaf, 2003; Gleick, 2000; Putnam, 2001; Schor, 1993). They questioned, theorized, worried about, and even feared what people would do with an overabundance of free time.

² This reminds me of a commercial i’ve seen online showing a couple at a restaurant sitting across from one other, yet so engrossed in their hand-held devices that they are each oblivious to the other. The scene caught my attention enough to want to know where this was going to go. I thought: perhaps an ad for a vacation? Maybe some kind of outdoors adventure? But no, wait, an ad for a smart phone? Yes, another device. Except, not just another device, of course, but one so superior in multi-tasking that it condenses its simultaneity into the ultimate time-saving device. The question is not: Why has checking Facebook at the dinner table become a standard normalcy? Instead of asking “Why?” the question is “How can it be done faster?” As implied in this lack of reflection, the ability to “save time,” ultimately often just paves way for new, previously unnecessary tasks towards the result of only filling up that time originally intended to save.

Yet, fast-forward 30+ years and the ironic reality finds Americans most likely to feel that they have *more to do*, not less, than their counterparts generations ago. Much like future visions predicting the normalcy of flying cars and housekeeping robots at the turn of the 21st century, the foretold picture of excess leisure is a piece of antiquated amusement.

So, what gives? Were these social scientists bad fortune-tellers? Was some aspect of social evolution unforeseen or underrated?

To appreciate the contextual reality of this riddle, that search must begin with the information providing its frame. That framework can be found within the surge of literature on time in the 1990s. It is this body that was responsible for casting the spotlight on the divergence between forecasted and actual time experience, hallmarking the discrepancy as a powerful characterization of American life.³

In 1992, Harvard economist Juliet Schor's (1993) *The Overworked American: The Unexpected Decline of Leisure* ignited an early spark by putting the paradox into numbers. In terms of *opportunity* to do less, she found that this much *had* actually come true.⁴ Her argument centered on numbers showing that growth in employee productivity as of 1992 could reproduce the 1948 standard of living in only half the time needed then. In other words, the maintenance of the 1948 standard of life would have required Americans in 1992 to work only four hours a work day, or 6 months out of the year. (Not quite in par with the nine hour work week of George Jetson, but heading in that direction.)

Yet, despite this concurrence with the forecasted opportunity of increased leisure time, Schor found that advantage had not been taken of the opportunity to spend less time working. Instead, reality found Americans working more. As one example in her repertoire, she found Americans working 163 more hours in 1987 than they did in 1969, with this amount roughly equating to an extra month of

³ The 1990s was a particularly significant era for time research. It produced an unprecedented unification (and perhaps, popularity) of time research around the theme of busyness, the first social science journal focusing on time, *Time & Society*, and a number of conferences devoted to it (for example, the "Time and Values" conference organized by the Institute for Cultural Research at Lancaster University in 1997, and the "Time-Use Conference" held by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the same year).

⁴ At least in terms of the work vs. leisure divide. The division of time takes many forms, depending on context, including work/leisure, work/home, public/private, etc. The first just represents one of, and perhaps the most popular pair.

working hours. The sentiment of overwork resonated strongly with the American public. Schor's book spent weeks on the *NY Times* bestseller's list and seemed to spawn numerous research offshoots revolving round the general notion of "having more to do" than past generations.

To move through the unraveling of the more-time/less-time paradox, it is helpful to consider the variety of themes centered in this idea of having more to do. Although the modern charge of having more to do is most popularly depicted around the centerpiece of working hours, Schor's original claim seemed to parallel as well as fuel a variety of related themes. Subsequent themes spun from the idea of people having more to do represent an erratic array, from the consequences of sacrificing self-care measures like healthy eating and sleeping habits, to the risk of technological overload, media saturation, and even eradicating the possibility of truly private time and space, to name a few.⁵ Yet, perhaps none has demanded as much attention as the intersection of having more to do and parenting, or that more eloquently described as the experiential juggling act of balancing time for life, work, and family.

Primarily concerned with balancing work and family, that intersection between family research and having "more to do" seems one off-shoot of the time-use studies data. Often concerned with the erosion of "family time," "quality time" with family, or other variant titles, this growing niche found its push from Arlie Hochschild's 1997 *Time-Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work*. Hochschild's blending of qualitative data into the mix of the time/life balance paved a poignant layer to the modern problem of finding time for all of life's facets. Adding to the statistical picture of numbers and hours, her observations of and interviews with 130 working adults, nearly all parents, created a more personalized voice for the specific struggle and consequences of having more to do as faced by working parents and their families.

⁵ See the documentary *We Live in Public* (Timoner, 2009) for an insightful look into one internet mogul's experiments with privacy and technology, including the orchestration of a literally underground community, entirely wired with surveillance cameras, always recording and accessible to all living there. The central theme of this work is consideration for the consequences of a totally 'wired,' or publicly accessible life, and the personal consequences of privacy's eradication.

In regards to the issue of the more-time/less-time paradox, these additional details lead Hochschild to a startling conclusion. Although it might seem logical to assume pressure from higher-ups as the driving force behind those workers routinely putting in extra hours, Hochschild's study actually finds these workers opting for the additional hours on their own accord. In what appears as a curious trade between the spatial signifiers of work and home, she reports this choice as stemming from the perception of many of her over-worked participants that home was a location associated with stress, and work represented that haven from which to escape it. In this work she conceptualizes the notion of a "third shift" as that resulting time needed to rectify the emotional damage done to the family unit as a result of overwork. As ultimately representing another demand from life at home, this largely invisible cost seems catalyst in furthering a cycle of stress begetting avoidance, begetting stress, and so on.

The urgency of Hochschild's message about the effect of the "time-bind" on families even caught the attention of the White House. In response, its Council of Economic Advisors launched its own investigation into the phenomenon it referred to as the "time-crunch" (Council of Economic Advisors, 1999). The results of their analysis concurred with concern for the reality of this phenomenon in finding working hours on the increase from 1969 to 1999, alongside a subsequent reduction of time available for sharing between family members.

The change across more recent spans of time show a continuing pattern of increase for reported work-loads, with Americans more likely to report "working hard" and "staying late at work" in the 1990s than they were just 10 years earlier (Putnam, 2001). Yet, while these and similar findings continue to provide supporting evidence that a time-bind or time-crunch exists, the question asking why still remains unfully answered. The route to fully answering this question will need a broader scope, but before moving on from the scenario of increasing work hours, one further factor calls attention.

Before moving on from this initial consideration of having more to do as a matter of increasing work hours, the discussion cannot conclude without reference to one more significantly relevant factor. As a persistently strong pattern greatly related to work and income, consistent growth in socioeconomic

inequalities across America's past 60 years is another potential propellant of increasing work hours. Somewhat surprisingly, this context offers insight into potential motivations for working more at both ends of the socioeconomic spectrum. For those at the lower end, proportionately decreasing wages⁶ have heightened the need for increased work hours and/or multiple jobs as a matter of maintaining basic life needs. [Or as articulated by former President G.W. Bush in response to a single mother of three, "You work three jobs? Uniquely American, isn't it?" (CNN News Wire Service, 2009)].

Yet, even for those at the higher end of the spectrum, growing social inequalities can lead to more work. Growing social inequalities breed new levels of "richness,"⁷ which can in turn heighten the desire towards emulating those increasingly higher socioeconomic brackets, and paradoxically lead the rich to wanting to work more. Supporting this claim are studies finding that higher earnings actually fuel a desire for increased working hours (Bowles & Park, 2005; Fehr & Götte, 2002).

Thus, as supported by the research conducted by Schor, Hochschild, the White House, and beyond, the mounting evidence of increasing work hours presents a strong case, and a logical context for fostering the sense of having more to do. However, the arguments supporting the claim of increasing work hours represent only half the story in this debate. It is not in the interest of thoroughness alone that this other half warrants attention, it further provides valuable clues towards unraveling the more-time/less-time paradox.

⁶ From 1973 to 2005, the top 10% of earners saw an increase in wages by 30% or more, whereas the bottom 50% of earners only saw a wage increase of 5% to 10% (Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, 2006). The income share of the top 10% of earners remained between 30-32% during WWII to the 1970s, crossing the 40% mark in the 1990s and reaching towards 45% at the turn of the century; the top 1% of earners have seen their share increase from about 8% in the 1960s and 70s to nearly 17% in 2000 (Piketty & Saez, 2006).

⁷ A New York Times piece (Fabrikant, 2005) comparing the 'old rich' and 'new rich' of Nantucket finds vast distinction, with the new more concerned with flaunting their money, more overt in their spending, and more competitive in their consumption (ordering a \$400 bottle of wine when the next table orders one for \$300, asserting the ownership of a transcontinental jet over a twin prop airplane, etc.). Furthermore, whereas the *use and utility* of commodities consumed by the 'old rich' may have more to do with consumer identity (a boat being related to family memories spent on it), today's consumer identity has more to do with *the spending itself*, with the extravagance of the act becoming a symbol for the worth and value of the consumer. [For a related discussion of the mystification of commodities, see Sennett (1992), and for the notion of consumer as commodity, Bauman (2007).]

While the resonance of overwork sparked a slew of research offshoots and theoretical explanations, another camp also emerged in time-use research, albeit with less fanfare. This facet marks another evolution from the already cited studies, yet in this case, standing in direct opposition. Along with the works of Schor and Hochschild, Robinson & Godbey's (1997) *Time for Life: The Surprising Ways Americans Spend Their Time* ranks as one of the most popular, and strongest references within the literature on modern time experience.

The authors openly state undertaking the aim of debunking Schor's claim of increasing work hours, despite the admitted difficulty of the task, especially given the resonance of her work with the American people. However, their detailed analysis of the *American's Use of Time Project* manages to rise to the challenge, presenting a solid method and source. As one of the few studies on time replicated across the decades of the past 60 years, the *American's Use of Time Project* is touted as the most comprehensive, historically-reaching database of time-use.

Robinson & Godbey focus in on issues of methodology to make the case for the validity of their findings, highlighting a comparison with Schor's. Implicating problems with the latter, they run through a list of commonly problematic areas for time-use research that can lead to questionable results, much of which revolves around the difficulty of parsing out subjective experiences into neat and clear-cut categories, labels, and even numbers.⁸ In providing a carefully detailed comparison of their methodology based on time-diaries instead of more standard survey data, they present a strong case for their findings. They assert, despite all the angles of support for the notion of increasing work hours, *that working hours have instead generally decreased since 1965*. In fact, they explicitly concur with that forecast of increased leisure time in claiming that this decrease of work has happened alongside *an average gain of free time* – specifically, an average gain of one hour of free time per day. While they do agree that the experience of a time-crunch is an accurate reality for some groups, including parents of young children and those in

⁸ Including issues such as the difficulty of putting certain activities into categories (like driving, for example), the reality of multi-tasking which may concern multiple activities, or categorizing an hour's worth of activity which may span a variety of appropriate labels.

first-career-oriented age brackets, busyness as a reality for some people at some points in their lives stands as a distinct matter from the question of temporal experience changing on the whole, for all people generally, across generations. Thus, despite all the evidence indicating otherwise, their claim indicates that the more-time/less-time paradox does not exist, or at least not so in terms of increasing work hours. Although still with less fanfare than that accorded to the notion of the overworked American, others have followed Robinson & Godbey's lead, and through their own analyses and angles have re-asserted and re-confirmed arguments against the idea that we are working more today than our predecessors (Gershuny, 2005; Goodin, Rice, Bittman, & Saunders, 2005).

Thus, the surge of the 1990s research on time-use forked into two camps on the issue of working hours. The refutation of its initially predominant assertion of increasing work hours found those supporting the claim on one side, and those rejecting it on the other. However, despite the primary focus on this general difference, divergence along this statistic did not split these sides into the entirely antithetical, mutually exclusive sides they are often presented as. In taking a closer look into the similarities and overlapping ideas present in the details of both cases, things get more interesting. They not only end up constructing a scenario which would allow sides of both arguments to co-exist, but in pushing the discussion beyond the parameters allowed by the study of time-use alone, they shed valuable insight into making sense of that overwhelming resonance with the notion of a temporally experiential paradox; they make sense of the modern identification with descriptors like over-work, time-crunch, and time-bind, despite the starkly different forecasts of temporal experience forecasted only decades ago.

The common denominator running between both bodies of literature, and the key to unraveling these temporal riddles can be simply summed up in the notion of the subjective experience of time.⁹ The details of the time-use research studies converge in findings calling attention to the consideration of temporality through perception – not by numbers, but through experience. Despite disagreements

⁹ This is not to imply that an objective experience of time exists. In fact the phrase “subjective experience” is a redundancy of sorts. However, the term was particularly chosen and is used throughout this paper as a means to emphasize and highlight the personal filters through which experience is . . . well, experienced.

regarding the number of and supposed increase or decrease of hours spent in different ways and designations of spending time, that the sense or feeling of being busy and having more to do has increased is an assertion shared by both sides.

While Robinson & Godbey's (1997) analysis presents itself in direct opposition to the quantitative assertions of Schor's "Overworked American," it nonetheless confirms a change in people's *perception* about doing more and having less time. Their analysis specifically offers the finding that from the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s, when asked about extent of "feeling rushed," the percentage of those reporting "always" jumped by an over 50% increase, whereas the number of those responding that they "quite often" have undesignated "time on their hands," shrunk by more than half. Furthermore, it revealed that even in comparison with countries reporting much less free time quantitatively, Americans significantly outweigh in reports of rushed, hurried feelings. Other researchers have concurred with a seeming discrepancy between quantitative measures of time-use and qualitative reports of time-experience, or between busy lives and busy feelings (Gershuny, 2005; Goodin et al., 2005). Thus, the conclusion that time-use studies alone are not enough to understand the significance of time in modern life provides the road-map to the next section which follows up on this suggestion.

To conclude: in the assessment of whether we truly have more to do today than generations ago, the quantitative scope of time-use is a popular contextual frame, often pin-pointing time spent towards paid-employment as a main factor. As a large and relatively anchored centerpiece around which most of the rest-of-life is planned, the realm of paid employment provides a logical and insightful starting place towards the untangling of this debate.¹⁰ However, while the popularity and debates between time-use study in the 90s yielded useful insights, this collection ultimately suggests the need for research to consider time through a less quantifiable lens.

¹⁰ Except, of course, for the populations of the unemployed and non-employed (those without employment either by chance or choice), whose various subgroupings provide other potentially insightful angles related to time.

Qualitatively More

This section picks up with the conclusion of the previous, in following that suggestion to move from research revolved around the use of time to that concerned with more subjective angles of that experience. In having left that section on the tails of finding evidence that regardless of the quantitatively perceived way people spend their time, that feelings of busyness have increased, this consideration finds guidance in a 2005 article written by Jonathan Gershuny. Entitled “Busyness as the Badge of Honor for the New Superordinate Working Class,” the article directly tackles that issue of busied feelings. As someone who concurs against the assertion of increasing work hours but nonetheless spotlights the significance of increasingly busied feelings, Gershuny follows through on that calling towards more qualitative considerations of the temporal experience.

So closely aligned with the direction of this review, the format of this article around three main points is replicated here as a means to frame the discussion. As his first point, he suggests the need to look at the feeling of having more to do beyond the parameters of paid employment. His second consideration finds meaning in the finding of the time-bind as a real context for select groups of the population. His main point, after which his article is named, culminates in the assertion of the significance of busyness as a new symbol of social status. Accordingly, a brief overview of some expanded considerations is provided. This section will use these topics as a means to guide this qualitative consideration.

To begin his consideration of time beyond quantitative time-use measures, Gershuny’s first consideration advocates the need for an investigation of busyness beyond paid employment. Particularly, he highlights the role of consumption as a driving force towards “high-pressured” and “dense” leisure time. The rampant growth of consumer culture in America (and the accordant advertising bombardment) is implicated as contributing towards an increase in the intensity, diversity, and frequency of leisure activities as a fuel towards busied feelings. The idea of intensified leisure or recreational activities has

been suggested as a symbol of “cultural voraciousness” (Sullivan & Katz-Gerro, 2007¹¹), and can be cast parallel to the “all-consuming passion”¹² of consumer culture. Thus, the consumerist philosophy of more and more not only breeds the new levels of desire for greater levels of richness that can translate to working more for more money (Bowles & Park, 2005; Schor, 1993), it can also transform life outside employment, infusing an accelerated drive to do more into the realm of leisure, blurring the lines of distinction and creating a context for leisure that can actually feel more like work.

Although not a focal point for Gershuny, the idea of busyness spilling beyond the scope of the quantitative hours spent in paid employment warrants the related mention of unpaid work. Some of the most poignant articulations of intensified to-do lists come from those responsibilities related to the less quantifiable realm of household management and childcare. Such articulations are commonly expressed in considering the intersection of gender with concepts like “time-poverty,” “time-bind,” and “time-crunch,” and often conclude the existence of a gendered divide that leaves women a disproportionate burden of unpaid work (Forssen et al., 2006; Hodgson et al., 2001; Warren, 2003; Windebank, 2007). However, the intensification of unpaid labor is well-documented from many angles of the modern individual and family.

From Hochschild’s “third shift” to the erosion of childhood, observations of over-scheduled, over-managed, and ultimately overwhelming home-lives show the inherent dangers. For example, one qualitative study of the modern family’s daily experience found it a norm for the majority of hours awake to revolve around the anticipation, adjustment, and prioritization of tasks, schedules, and calendars (Darrah, 2007). Affirmation of this context often expresses specific concern for the changing state of childhood. Where the after-school time of the average American child may have once been spent in a relatively unsupervised and/or unorganized manner, the increased pressure on today’s children to

¹¹ A newly coined relative of the concept of “cultural omnivorousness”; the difference is that this newer term represents the desire merely focused on the number and frequency of leisure activities as opposed to greater concern with breadth and variety.

¹² A term used by Sennett (2007) to indicate an ever-expanding, and thus never satisfied drive towards consumption.

become more adult and work-like (i.e., busier) at earlier ages is symbolized by increasing involvement in structured activities. The onslaught of piano lessons and soccer practices can render the perceived necessity of day planners and schedulers at earlier and earlier ages. The expectation (particularly true of higher socio-economic classes) that children be more involved in such activities not only signals the growing importance of being busy, even at the risk of childhood's redefinition,¹³ it represents a type of unpaid work for both children and their parents who must take on extra responsibility in managing, coordinating, and financing the busy schedules of their children (Agger, 2004).

The inter-related idea of our leisure/free/off-duty time just generally becoming more work-like is a related frame for exploring modern-day busyness beyond the debate of working hours. Entangled here are notions of increased capacity for doing more with our time (often linked to technological advancement) and the desire to do so. An expanded ability to do more finds a simple equation from expanding the amount to-do outside of working hours. As one example, the explosion of information technologies has led the opportunity and expectation to take on roles today that were once unavailable outside of specialized training and schooling. Responsibilities once relegated to experts in a range of fields have been "insourced" as we cruise the Internet to diagnose ailments, find corresponding treatments, search for real estate, conduct research for the purchase of a vehicle/pet/prescription/vacation, and so on (Darrah, 2007).¹⁴ Some have highlighted the resultantly perceived need to plan and schedule 'the rest of life' along work-mentality lines, thus also diminishing the opportunity for spontaneity within these facets (Agger, 2004; Hochschild, 1997). As will be discussed in further detail later, Rosa's (2009) conception of social acceleration finds alignment with a cycle of generally ever-expanding possibilities provoking a source of potentially perpetual pressure. While many variant considerations offer valuable insight into the notion of busied lives beyond work, it is best to keep this tangent brief in order to move on with the two remaining points of Gershuny's article.

¹³ See Sennett (1992) for a consideration of the historical evolution of the concept of childhood.

¹⁴ The exponentially rising rate of media consumption due the growing immediacy/instantaneity of technology is another, highly relevant topic which unfortunately has not found enough room within the scope of this review . . .

In addition to the idea that segments of time beyond work are becoming/feeling more intensive, Gershuny posits two additional points to present another angle worth consideration: the interplay between personal time-use and its underlying cultural significance. Despite his own affirmation of an *over-all* decrease in time spent working, the first of his remaining two points highlights the validity of increasing work hours for *certain* groups. In comparing the change from 1961 to 2001, Gershuny finds that while groups with lower “human capital” have seen the generalized increase in non-working time, those with higher human capital, on the other hand, *have* actually witnessed an increase in working hours. Further, while those in the former group were more likely to be employed than the latter in 1961, the reverse is true today. In other words, while lower class individuals were once more likely to be employed and spend more time working, this is more true of the upper class members today. Presented as contributors to a widening gap between groups dichotomized in relation to working hours, these trends mark a curious shift for which Robinson & Godbey (1997) articulate as the irony of the so-called “working class” now having more leisure and the supposed “leisure class” now having more work. The sentiment echoes in findings that particular groups *have* demonstrated quantifiably sufficient validity for busy feelings, in considering that such groups include the affluent, the college-educated, and those with high-status and/or corporate positions (Hochschild, 1997; Putnam, 2001; Robinson & Godbey, 1997).

Gershuny’s final point represents an ultimate point – an integration of the first two pieced together to construct the picture of busyness beyond numbers. This third and final point posits busyness as a “new badge of honor.” In drawing recognition to the underlying social construction of time it both illuminates the significance of the modern time experience and extends a promising avenue of insight. Towards unfolding the seeming paradox between feelings about time-use and its numerically-based measurement, this suggests a more covert, perhaps more fundamentally powerful shift in cultural orientation towards time. His findings imply a shifting of social status and value as represented in relation to time with work taking the place of what leisure once used to signify. Where engaging in leisure activities was once considered a sign of status and upper-class position, it is now working or being busied

(once correlated with lower-class groups out of necessity), that has become a predominating measure of social worth and value. This final point, and the namesake of his article, suggests the ultimate promise of research as based upon this less quantifiable perception of time.

In sum, regardless of debate concerning whether we actually do have more to do than our counterparts in past generations, the overriding conclusion across all sides is that there is validity for the feeling of having more to do. People generally feel busier, but are at greater risk to the experience of time-pressure dependent upon membership in certain groups. That such groups encompass those with higher social status or “capital” has implications for the cultural influences of time experience. Next, consideration will be given to the latter part of the sense of having more to do and less time to do it, adding another layer onto the construction of our time experience.

Less Time

The second section of this literature review, Less Time, seeks to look behind the more-to-do characterization of the modern time experience to consider what’s going on behind the scenes. Attention here will concern the social lens through which time is seen, and thus also experienced, including the influences shaping this perception. As the previous section, this one is broken into two subcategories: the first representing a quantitative consideration, and the second a qualitative one.

Guided by the ideas of Marx, the first subcategory: *Quantitatively Less*, considers the quantification of time as a phenomenon through which time becomes commodified and owned, thus necessarily rendering the perception of its availability as restricted. The related issue of temporal orientation considers the according division between time-orientation and task-orientation. The second subcategory, *Qualitatively Less*, considers social acceleration as a qualitative descriptor of quantified time. It depicts an accordant experience of accelerated time, or pace of life, also necessarily limiting perception of time’s availability. Hartmut Rosa’s (2009) theoretical description provides the groundwork of understanding this phenomenon as rooted in the interplay between culture and economy.

Quantitatively Less

Perhaps the earliest name in sociology to take up notions of temporal perception, this first and quantitative consideration hones in on the ideas of Marx. The concept he calls the commodification of time is a notion based from within the intersection of time, labor, and economy. Formulated in the context of industrialization, his ideas cast this transformation into a wage-labor dependent society as significant to fostering an equation of time to money.

In divorcing the concept of work from the direct care and sustenance of oneself and family (a tie bound in the agrarian society), the realm of paid employment separates work from life, turns labor into a paycheck, and time a yardstick to assign value. Embodied through temporal and spatial boundaries between work and home, the relation of paid labor to time finds itself superficially necessitating particular templates of time built around location.¹⁵ As a means towards someone else's profit, paid labor constructs the notion of temporal ownership through the suspension of time's authority by employer custody [it makes labor "involuntary" (Marx, 1994a, p. 62)]. The day is not perceived as an unfolding process of life, it becomes divided by markers of time, dichotomized into time spent working and the-rest-of-life (designated by descriptors such as free time, off-time, leisure time, personal time, down time, etc.). Accordingly, Marx posits that these processes bound with the realm of labor transform time into the lurking commodity for sale behind exchanges of money and labor, infusing time with the literal capacity of being bought and sold (1994a, p. 266).

The historical backdrop of industrialization under which his ideas formed represent a significant period for consideration of the cultural/economic/temporal triad. As a process underlined by the reconciliation of temporal value by culture and economy, industrialization emphasizes this relation as one pivotal to the social construction of Western time, over time, and its overlapping subjective counterpart (the *seemingly* personal/subjective experience of time). Although contributing and consequential shifts in

¹⁵ At least historically speaking, as today's temporal experience has witnessed a curious kind of reversing. Particularly due to technological advancement, the general boundaries of time and space are rapidly deteriorating, as well as related boundaries like work and home, work and leisure, and even public and private.

science, technology, and consumerism are irrefutably linked, the relationship between industrialization, time's social construction, and the personal experience of time are particularly embedded within paid labor. Time's commodification (or quantification) as a significant influence still today shows its strength in suggesting the very reason behind recent literature's preoccupation with time as a matter of divisible, mathematic form.

The changing sense of time shared by person and society as played out across industrialization is additionally captured in the notion of "time-orientation" as outlined in E.P. Thompson's (1967) classic work, "Time, Work, and Industrial Capitalism." In the article he differentiates the industrialized temporal perception, referred to as "time-orientation," from that called "task-orientation," a descriptor applied to the temporal perspective of pre-industrial or agrarian societies (or groups). Quite basically, the former relies on a heavily quantified framework of *time's* passage, while the latter indicates the perception of *life's* passage without quantified parameters. Where the former relies on the hours and minutes of the clock, task-orientation relays a focus on the present, in-the-moment, and potentially flexible task-at-hand (perhaps with no cognition at all for the divisionary, Western notion of time¹⁶).

Similar to Marx, Thompson depicts the shift from the agrarian to the industrialized society, and the resultant separation between work and home, as paralleling a transformation from task-orientation to time-orientation. He hones in on the emergence of the clock as a powerful influence. Thompson additionally zeroes in on the factory and the church as the first two places for the clock to emerge; he focuses on bureaucratic and religious influences as intertwined, highly-charged forces driving the internalization of socially quantified time.

Thompson additionally provides contrast in the example of the task-oriented society, primarily agrarian and untouched by industrialization,¹⁷ which attends to the moment instead of the clock. Such societies and groups tend to embrace the more natural parameters of distinction (daylight, night, seasons,

¹⁶ See Bourdieu's (1963) description of the Algerian perception as an example of time experienced as an unquantifiable flow.

¹⁷ Not many such societies are left; see Mead (1956), *New Lives for Old: Cultural Transformation in Manus, 1928-1953*, for a before and after example.

etc.).¹⁸ That this relative flexibility allows for and primarily serves to foster familial and communal development reflects a distinctly dissonant set of social values. Further elaboration of these natural/social parameters is provided by such examples as the Algerian peasant (Bourdieu, 1963), the Nuer (Evans-Pritchard, 1939), and the Lakota Tribe (Pickering, 2004). Some task-oriented societies continue to exist presently, usually in smaller, on the fringe communities such as religious groups, anti-modernist groups, and ethnic groups, such as the Amish and Native American tribes. A more universal example of task-orientation can be found in the role of parenthood, as one where the needs of the moment necessarily override the parameters of the clock.

Although the distinction between task-orientation and time-orientation has garnered criticism for its simplicity (compounded in its brief overview here),¹⁹ it nonetheless represents a laudable effort towards untangling the social construction of time as a frame of its subjective/lived experience. The distinction also provides a rough sketch of an aligned divergence between temporal perception and social value. Thompson hits upon the undeniably crucial emergence of the clock towards a changing perception of time, hinting at its embodiment of quantification as a symbol of deeper social value/influence.

The lurking factor behind the relationship between the clock and paid labor is, of course, the paycheck. The solidification of time's dissection into quantifiable parameters is perhaps best summed in the ever-popular equation that **"time is money."** Foreshadowing this heavy-handed maxim, Marx highlighted the transformation of labor, and ultimately life itself, in the intrusion of money as a self-necessitating bridge between work and survival. It is within the industrialized market of exchange between commodity and money that time becomes a necessary independent variable (Adam 1998). Labor as commodity brackets time into distinctions of ownership through divisions between that

¹⁸ While our distinctions of day/night, and even months to a certain extent (seasonally speaking) can be said to rely on such natural parameters – the week stands out as a highly superficial, "man-made" parameter of time (see Zerubavel (1985), *The Seven Day Circle* for a discussion).

¹⁹ See Westenholtz (2006) for a more detailed/reality-based view of a gradual shift during which "clock time" and "task time" actually co-exist as opposed to the more generally broad talk in terms of a before and after to which task time and clock time run parallel.

belonging to oneself versus one's employer,²⁰ wrapping the necessity of its quantified regard around both time and money. As the necessity of temporal parameters constructs around profit, it quantifies the experience of daily life into the equations and decimal points of wages/salaries and time-sheets. As quantifiable by definition, money's translation into time brings a new weight of enforcement to the division of hours and minutes. As time is quantified, its value is relegated to measures of how much and how fast. The capitalistic desire towards an endless well of profit and its translation of time into money means we can never have enough of either . . . Let the race begin . . .

Qualitatively Less

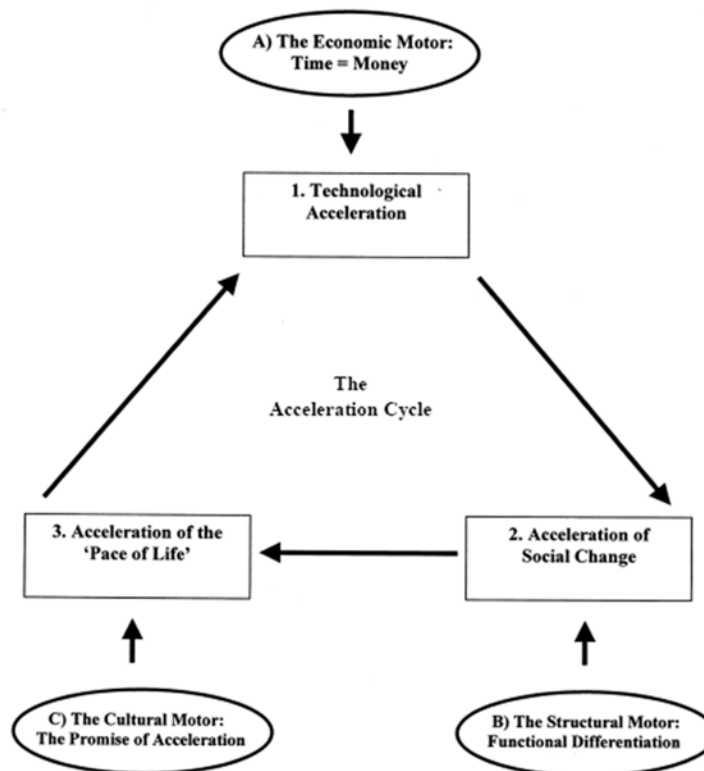
Social acceleration represents a phenomenon related to that quantified orientation to time. It is one that could even represent a qualitative, or experiential flipside, of sorts. The experience of accelerated time plays both cause and effect to the restricted sense of time's availability. To explore this idea I will use Rosa's model of social acceleration as a cyclically endless cycle within capitalism.

Seen on the following page, Figure 1 depicts Rosa's (2009) model of acceleration. As the triad shows, social acceleration is considered the synergistic effort of three parts: (1) technological acceleration, (2) acceleration of social change, and (3) acceleration of the pace of life. He finds each component of acceleration bound to its own drive: (A) the economic motor, (B) the structural motor, and (C) the cultural motor, respectively. Appreciation of the model's relevance to this paper warrants a summary of these six concepts, or three pairs.

²⁰ However, not to suggest that the distinction of "time ownership" is not possible outside the realm of paid employment. This sense would also include a broader array of experientially lost agency, including more blatantly involuntary positions (slaves/servants, prisoners, mental institution patients), but could even be extended to the infantile recognition for the principles of reality [Freud, (1989)], and would additionally need consider the seemingly less involuntary parameters of the religious institutions from which our modern schedules developed (Zerubavel, 1981) (. . . for which, the argument could even be made for a distinction of "God's time." Although the role of religion receives mention in this paper, neither its relevance for the linkage between culture and temporality, nor its implicated interplay in the culture/economy dynamic of acceleration, is afforded the justice it deserves here . . .)

The most crucial pairing for this paper is between “the cultural motor” and the “acceleration of the ‘pace of life’.” The dynamic of this relationship shows energy flowing from the former to the latter. Accordant to its representation as a motor, the cultural motor generates its fuel through “the promise of acceleration.” Rosa describes this promise as one offering the ideal of “the good life,” as suggested through the achievement of taking advantage of all life’s opportunities. The goal of attaining the good life results in the urge to capitalize upon more and more horizons/endeavors/profit/etc., and finds the pace of life accelerating as a natural response (with the energy of acceleration flowing from C to 3 in the model). In other words, the urge to do more equals an acceleration of life’s pace.²¹

Figure 1: Rosa’s “Motors of Acceleration”



²¹ For a comparison of the pace of life in major cities, see Levine et al. (1989)

Following the arrows, the “acceleration of the ‘pace of life’” leads to technological acceleration, often overtly motivated by harnessing the former’s increase. (This incentive is often found in the marketing schemes of and commercials for many modern-day “time-saving” devices.) As depicted, technological acceleration is also driven by the economic motor. Of extra significance to this study, it is specifically the economic motor as fueled by the equation between time and money that fits into this model.

Following the arrow from technological acceleration leads to the acceleration of social change. A quintessential example of this dynamic is found within the realm of social networking, where the creation of new arenas such as texting, tweeting, and facebook result in change happening at a quicker rate. Some of the most drastic examples come from the list of national uprisings largely coordinated with these tools: a list which grew long in 2011 alone. As additionally depicted, the acceleration of social change is also fueled by the structural motor, which dictates that in a society structured by functional (as opposed to hierarchical) systems, functional differentiation increases complexity, but also opportunities for change.

Thus, the flow of energies within the model seems overall logical and reasonable. However, in looking more closely, not only does a contradiction exist within these pieces, it is from within it that the crux of this cycle operates.

That crux is found in tracing the accelerating pace of life as leading to technological acceleration, and finding the latter is at least partially fueled by the intent to harness the former. In fact, this is exactly that logic which conjured those archaic forecasts of excess leisure for the inhabitants of the 21st century. This logic delineates that the successful development of devices or processes able to more quickly and efficiently function would mean the ability to “save time.” It is true that the continually increasing evolution of wireless advancements in the forms of cell phones and texting, GPS systems, laptops, ipads, and iphones, etc., have undoubtedly presented an impossible listing of opportunities to get things done quicker than 50, or even 10, or even one year ago. Yet, as the broadly reached conclusions evolved from the time-use literature boom of the 90’s assert: despite these time-saving opportunities, busied feelings

have reached a new peak. Herein lays the contradiction. If technological advancement truly did harness the accelerating pace of life, the cycle would end after a full round. It doesn't. Or at least, it hasn't. It is the *failure of expectation here upon which the cycle renews*. For acceleration to self-induce, the technological acceleration that would expectedly function as a mechanism of time-saving instead grows alongside the increasing pace of life and resultant perception of time scarcity. Basically, *social acceleration finds itself in the irony of an inversely intertwined relationship between efforts towards controlling/managing time and ability to actually do so.*

Rosa uncovers the core of this riddle, the crux of the accelerated society, and thus the answer to the paradox of forecasted excess leisure, as bound to the circumstance of acceleration's outpacing by growth. In other words, the generation of growth at a greater rate than acceleration creates a situation where acceleration can never keep up, and more is always in demand. As to the reason why this scenario can occur, Rosa pinpoints continuing *change to the quantity of activity itself*. He points to the cultural motor of acceleration as the site through which emphasis on an unachievably ever-extending goal of more can take root.

The culturally bred promise of acceleration details the infusion of that goal. Here is that cultural influence that encourages the perpetual need for more and more. To the person wanting to "live life to its fullest," the ideal "good life" promises the ability to take advantage of all opportunities life has to offer. Yet, with the ever-extending realm of opportunities, it is this drive which urges the never-achievable compulsion towards them all. It is this drive, focused on the quantitation of more that yields an ever-extending, thus necessarily unachievable goal. Rosa specifies this drive as specific to the capitalist context. This drive, ultimately of perpetual dissatisfaction with what one has, is one Rosa finds rooted in the economic motor generated by the equation of time to money.²² The drive of the good capitalist, always wanting more of the latter, ultimately translates this bottomless compulsion into doing more and more with the former. The cultural motor thus operates here to increase both the horizon of and desire

²² This drive is also, more internally paralleled with issues of mortality. Although not considered in detail here, Rosa's ideas in this regard hint of Thompson's religious underpinnings of clock-time.

to partake in greater quantities of potential activity - the regeneration of impossible ideals in the creation of a context for which “our share of the world, the proportion of realized world options to potentially realizable ones, decreases (contrary to the original promise of acceleration) no matter how much we increase the ‘pace of life’” (p. 13).

The seemingly paradoxical relation between the cultural and economic motors finds expression in those inverted *forecasts of excess leisure time* from decades ago. The anticipated dynamic between pace of life and the rise of technological acceleration voiced itself in expectation of the latter to decrease the amount of time necessary for personal accomplishment (in a range of arenas including travel, communication, household chores, cooking, etc.). The equation was not entirely incorrect; technology has decreased the time demands of a variety of particular tasks. Yet, what it seems to have neglected is the functioning of the motors driving these forms of acceleration, or at least, the ability of the cultural motor to reconfigure activity itself, into an unrealizable self-propellant of pace, ever extending beyond the grasp of reality.

Acceleration’s elusory promise of fulfillment, generated and lapsed within the cultural context, untangles the *discrepancy between feelings towards and use of time* as discussed in the findings of time-use research. First, it logically drives the sense of busyness in perpetuating the continually failed aim to keep up, resonating with descriptions of life as a “hamster wheel.” The unrealizable ideal of “the good life” as infused in the aim towards a perpetual “more,” leaves the sense or perception that more can/should/could always be done, thus yielding the complaint of too little time to accomplish it all (regardless of the quantifiable alignment with time use). The idea of cultural voraciousness (mentioned earlier) where doing more becomes an end in itself, is one example of an overtly quantitative pursuit. Secondly, the alignment of “the good life” with doing more overlaps with Gershuny’s suggestion for the symbolic significance of busyness, supporting the notion of busyness as an emerging value, and as one logically bound to the implied value of speed. The notion of busyness as a symbol of social status shares

strong parallels with the notion of accelerating life pace through culture, and even with the particular draw to live “the good life” (with both themes implicating connections to money).

Rosa’s specification that it is the quantity of activity that pushes growth beyond acceleration implies that this cultural configuration rests upon a quantified orientation to activity, one that flows from culture through the pace of life, and finds itself within time’s highly quantifiable potential as a logical frame. In other words, in quantifying the activity of subjective experience, or that which makes up the daily pace of life, it suggests that the accelerated society function on the basis of a **quantified temporal experience**.

Before following this implication into the next section on *quantified time*, a quick review will summarize the relevance of social acceleration to the presently proposed study. Three main points comprise this list:

- (1) modern day life in America is an exemplary form of social acceleration, a phenomenon whose framework thus provides an important lens for its exploration, and whose lack of academic consideration calls for the need
- (2) acceleration as a prime social characterization conveys the necessity of a temporal lens towards its exploration, and in highlighting the crucial dynamic of culture and subjective time experience, it affirms the relevance of research for this particular partnership, both as a hallmark of social acceleration and as a peculiarity of modern day experience
- (3) the specification of quantification as the mechanism through which culture acts to fuel accelerating life pace suggests that this phenomenon would well inform the study of its housing dynamic

This combination not only conveys the relevance of and need for research on the dynamic between culture and subjective time experience, it provides the bigger-picture context within which the details of the following section make sense.

Quantity & Quality

This final section of the literature review, concerning Quantity & Quality, is intended as a bridge between it and the methodology to come. Although a part of the literature review, it is also an internal addendum of sorts, as a response to the conclusions drawn from the previous two sections. While these previous sections provide a more general overview into some research pockets related to modern temporality, this concluding section of the literature review piece narrows in focus as gearing towards the formulation of the study to follow. The two components of this discussion: quantified time and quality time, loosely represent the problem statement and research question, respectively. First, an overview of the culminating ideas from the previous sections follows in introduction to these final discussions:

In the first section, the More To Do characterization found that despite the forecasting of excess leisure time from decades ago, realized at least to the extent of advanced productivity, that Americans are nonetheless reporting feeling more busied and rushed than ever before. While these pervasive feelings are often linked to the realm of paid employment, temporal experience outside of this arena has also seen intensification, with one implication finding the constriction of non-working time into the mold of a more work-like experience. That the experience of busyness, or that called the time-bind, time-crunch, or time-poverty (to name a few names), finds an especially real context (quantitatively speaking) for certain segments of the population further suggests implications of a shift in temporal perception, particularly so as a truth for those of the upperclass. The scenario signals that a curious shift has occurred, swapping the social significance of work and leisure: Whereas leisure once stood as a symbol of status, it is now busyness which implies a high station. For the concern of socially shaped temporality, the findings that people are reporting feeling busier and that busyness has replaced leisure as the behavioral symbol of upper class status present an intriguing combination.

The second section, Less Time, aimed to provide a social context for this busied society. The earliest, and one of the strongest sociologically-claimed theories of temporality is Marx's commodification of time. Presenting the historical intersecting of economy and culture during the time of industrialization,

his theory illuminates the roots of the most popular temporal analogy today: the equation of time to money. The depiction suggests that this context and equation shape a quantified orientation to time through the numerical parameters of currency and the clock. The phenomenon of social acceleration presents another angle offering insight into increasingly busied feelings. In detailing the facets of acceleration, the theory ultimately shows that the cycle renews within the cultural impetus towards continually increasing strides towards doing more. A (particularly capitalist) catch 22 situation, the success of doing more (or making more [money]) in this system necessarily spawns ever-increasingly higher goals of more to do. As the model of social acceleration depicts, the initial grounds for the entire phenomenon again find roots in that equation of time to money.

Thus, the common denominator of both time's commodification and social acceleration lays in that equation of time to money. The analogy is interestingly complementary to the first section's main points about time-use studies, feelings of busyness/intensified time, and the significance of busyness as a sign of status. The equation of time to money as a common denominator reveals a 'natural' parallel between the attachment of social status to busied time. An underlying theme capturing all these pieces is the function of quantification. The characterization of having more to do and less time is perhaps best summarily understood through the characterization of a temporal orientation oriented towards quantification.

As a unified theme in representing both a socially shaped framework and the personal experience of time, the first subcategory of this section: quantified time, stands in distilled representation of that context of more to do and less time. A problem statement of sorts, this section hones in on the significance of this depiction of modern temporality. To begin, the notion of quantified time is contextualized as representative of a shifting temporal perception across the past 60 years. Within this frame, the consequences for the individual and society provide further detail, yet also the call for even further consideration. In response to the previous sections' conclusion of ours as a quantified experience of time, this section attends to the question: So what?

To follow, the final subcategory of this section, as well as the conclusion of the literature review portion, switches gears to consider the idea of Quality Time. A notion suggested to me in the early formulations of my interest in the subjective experience of time, i was initially unsure as to the fit. Yet, as the ultimate organization of this entire review attests, the issues of quantity and quality seem at the very center of modern temporality. I can't now fathom any other framework that would do. As the chosen lens of the intended exploration of subjective temporality to come, Quality Time best represents this study's notion of a research question. In the form of the topic which shaped its methodology, this concluding consideration of the literature acts as bridge to the following section on methods.

Quantified Time (Problem Statement)

The focus of this section, the notion of quantified time, is used as a summative term representing the shift of temporal perception across the past 60 years. This section is intended as a type of problem statement in contextualizing this shift and providing a fuller picture of its consequences. As an initial consideration, the framework of this shift since mid-20th century finds articulation in the works of Richard Sennett. His *Corrosion of Character* (2000) and the *Culture of the New Capitalism* (2007) particularly lend a hand in looking beyond the documentation of this shift into the reasonings behind it, extending reach beyond the question of what, to the curiosity of why and how.

Sennett zeroes in on the most significant social shift across the past 60 years as that from a cultural context of long-term to short-term. Where the long-term frameworks of stability and security once emphasized the life-long, from career to marriage, the more recently inflated value of the short-term may grant greater opportunities in the forms of flexibility and adaptability - yet, not without a cost. Sennett posits that this social shift is born from the evolutionary context of capitalism he refers to as "the new capitalism." Starting in the work-world, the "iron cage" of social capitalism as characterized by long-

term careers and the life-long development of particular skill sets (or craftsmanship²³), begins changing in the development of a new capitalism based on short-term profit, adaptable skill sets, and flexible career aspirations. The shift is one he sees as consequentially extending its influence to the life of individual, even to the extent of pressuring the internalization of values incongruent with the human experience of life as a linear trajectory, and at the risk to significantly relevant, long-term values like trust, commitment, engagement, and even identity. Actually, Sennett does the best job in summing up the context and consequences of the short-term world in his title, *“Corrosion of character: The personal consequences of work in the new capitalism.”* Drawn to these topics through their human reflection, he opens the *Corrosion of Character* in sharing the story of the chance meeting which seemed to initiate the construction of these conclusions from the ground up.

This opening story describes his accidental meeting with Rico, the son of a man whom he had interviewed nearly 30 years prior in writing a book on class and blue-collar workers in America. Unexpectedly running into him at an airport decades later, Sennett is first caught by the stark contrast between this man, Rico, today and his father, Enrico, 30 years ago at roughly the same age. Sennett reflects that, “Enrico, his father, then worked as a janitor, and had high hopes for this boy, who was just entering adolescence . . . In the airline lounge, Rico looked as if he had fulfilled his father’s dreams. He carried a computer in a smart leather case, dressed in a suit I couldn’t afford, and sported a signet ring with a crest” (p. 15). Yet, Sennett soon realizes that the differences between the picture of this business man in an expensive suit and his father the janitor are neither so stark, nor straightforward.

During the incidental opportunity of sharing a long flight together, Sennett coaxes an at-times hesitant Rico into a more detailed conversation about the life of Rico, his wife, and their children. Sennett’s curiosity is peaked in feeling a sense of contradiction inherent to this family’s ‘on paper’ success.

²³ Although not considered here, Sennett’s (2008) *The Craftsman* provides a more detailed account of the value and reward of long-term skill development and the drive to do a job well for its own sake.

Ultimately, he ends up learning that “prosperous as they are, the very acme of an adaptable, mutually supportive couple, both husband and wife often fear they are on the edge of losing control over their lives” (p. 19). While initially “not prepared to shed many tears for this American Dream couple,” Sennett’s observation that “this fear is built into their work histories,” takes deeper root in appreciating that what Rico ultimately expressed in this chance meeting was that he “feared that the actions he needs to take and the way he has to live in order to survive in the modern economy have set his emotional, inner life adrift” (p. 20). In other words, as the full title of this work again indicates, the synopsis of Rico’s struggle ultimately lay in the face of challenges to a sustained, coherent sense of character. This initially seeming contradiction provides another picture of a riddle whose unwinding finds at its core the matter of time.

Sennett articulates:

What had most struck me about Enrico and his generation was how linear time was in their lives: year after year of working in jobs which seldom varied from day to day. And along that line of time, achievement was cumulative: Enrico and Flavia [his wife] checked the increase in their savings every week, measured their domesticity by the various improvements and additions they had made to their ranch house. Finally, the time they lived was predictable. The upheavals of the Great Depression and World War II had faded, unions protected their jobs; though he was only forty when I met him, Enrico knew precisely when he would retire and how much money he would have . . . To make time accumulate, Enrico needed what the sociologist Max Weber called an ‘iron cage,’ a bureaucratic structure which rationalized the use of time; in Enrico’s case, the seniority rules of his union about pay and the regulations organizing his government pension provided this scaffolding. When he added to these resources his own self-discipline,²⁴ the result was more than economic. He carved out a clear story for himself in which his experience accumulated materially and psychically; his life thus made sense to him as a linear narrative (p. 16).

As relayed in this description, the long-term experience of Enrico’s generation is characterized by linearity, cumulative achievement, delayed gratification, rationalization, discipline, predictability, and even a sense of narrative or identity. In contrast to the stability of Enrico’s generation, the new capitalist system (taking form in the late 20th century), is temporally antithetical: it is an ‘uncaged’ system based in

²⁴ See Sennett (2006) for a discussion on the linkage between militarized capitalism and delayed gratification as additionally grounded in the notion of linear, predictable time (as one is more likely to accept delaying gratification when a sense of linearity provides confidence of an ultimate payoff.).

the short-term values of flexibility and adaptability, one that views stability as weakness instead of strength and operates on with the motto “No long term.” In contrast, Rico’s experience in a short-term world instead emphasizes adaptability, immediacy, efficiency, flexibility, and even risk.

Currently in the process of applying for refinancing, an analogy comes to mind in the comparison between a fixed-rate versus an adjustable rate mortgage. A fixed-rate mortgage grants the security of knowing, with guarantee, what the interest rate will be presently and at every point in the future. Like the long-term context, the benefit is the stability and security of knowing what to expect. In contrast stands the option of an adjustable rate mortgage. This option offers the benefit of flexibility: the fluctuation of the interest rate to potentially lower future interest rates. The drawback, however, is of course its according ability to also move in the other direction. Like the short-term world, the adjustable-rate option offers the capacity for flexibility, but also increased risk.²⁵

As Sennett articulates, the contextual prizing of risk and instability (and according opportunity for failure) can yield pervasive, and free floating feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, and depression.²⁶ As the superficiality of the short-term work-world can disturb the individual’s identity as worker, (i.e., impeding the long-term experience of maintaining a single role throughout life, honing and improving upon a particular skill set over time, developing a solid sense of identity through role as worker/producer/craftsman), the significance of this component of identity to an overall sense of self suggests ominous consequences for the individual’s sense of self as meaningful, valuable, and contributing.²⁷ Yet, the effects ripple beyond orientation to work: the rise of moving for the sake of career, is just one example of a more broadly influential facet encouraging a sense of groundlessness. A

²⁵ That risk was epitomized in the recent housing crash: A large proportion of borrowers choosing the adjustable rate option up through 2006 largely encouraged the subsequent decline of the housing market, in turn creating the vicious cycle in which these borrowers faced consequently sky-rocketing rates, in turn increasing financial hardship and the subsequent numbers of repossessions, foreclosure, and evictions, into the prolonged crashing of a cyclically downward spiral (BBC News, 2007; Bernard, 2011).

²⁶ Sennett (2007) makes a distinction between the dread of yesterday versus the anxiety of today: “Anxiety attaches to what might happen; dread attaches to what one knows will happen. Anxiety arises in ill-defined conditions, dread when pain or ill-fortune is well defined” (p. 53).

²⁷ For some interesting angles on the significance of worker identity, see Lamont (2000), and Terkel (1972).

phenomenon so routinized (for some segments), the cycle of relocation characterizes the creation of a cultural sub-grouping referred to as 'relos' (Kilborn, 2005).

While this overview of the shift from long-term to short-term temporality has been a relatively brief, and quite inadequate synopsis of Sennett's layered ideas, the ultimate point of focus for the present discussion is to provide the framework of this shift as one unfolding across the past 60 years, and as one whose initiation in the transformation of bureaucracy has seeped into the life of the individual.

The Individual

As individuals, we have the experience of an accelerated, faster-paced world. In comparison with past generations, we not only feel that we have more to do and less time, but due the unstable experience of deteriorating temporal and spatial boundaries underlying these feelings, we live out a less grounded and more fragmented experience of time.

In a basic sense, the feeling of busyness threatens ill-effects due the basis of time conflict. That conflict frames the correlation between busyness, stress, and anxiety. Although busyness is arguably beneficial, even morally strengthening in the Calvinist/Protestant sense, that its character today is shaped towards the futile aim to 'outsmart' time²⁸ seals its experience in a perpetually extending and unsuccessful cycle: a ripe breeding ground for stress and anxiety.

"Sped-up lives" breed tiredness, manifesting in fatigue, restlessness, bodily detachment, and anxiety (Widerberg, 2006). Encouraged by overwork, fatigue, and impatience, heightened and prolonged states of stress can trap the body in unnecessarily drawn-out states of 'fight or flight,' in which the

²⁸ This aim towards 'outsmarting time' is a more futile and angst-ridden evolution of time's framing as a challenge. Perceived throughout earlier stages of modernity as something 'to keep up with,' this goal was at least more realistic than the impossibility of outsmarting time. The latter's impossibility lay within the fact that, although perception of it is largely a product of social construct, that time does have an underlying, objective set of natural limits, particularly exemplified in the limits of the body (in terms of physical capacity for endurance, the need for food and sleep, the consequences of aging, etc.). Rosa suggests that the paralleled fear and goal running beneath the temporal angst about and efforts to "outsmart time" is truly boiled down to a matter of fear for and futile attempts to thwart the ultimate limitation of the body: inescapable mortality.

instinctual shut-down of important bodily functions (rendered less crucial in crisis-mode) can ultimately yield serious health risks (Sapolsky, 2008). Anxiety tops the charts of mental illness worldwide, with the highest rate in the United States (Associated Press, 2004): a rate that has been on the increase generationally since the 1950s (Twenge, 2007). Cycles of stress and anxiety are the underpinnings of the infamous 'type A' personality, also considered the time-urgent personality. These characteristics drastically increase proneness to a variety of illnesses and conditions, with the fatality of coronary disease at the top of the list (Yarnold & Grimm, 1982).

Not having enough time to accomplish all that one wishes necessitates compromise and sacrifice. Feeding into those cycles of fatigue, stress, and anxiety, the first offering to the chopping block is often self-care. When feeling pressed for time, sleep, exercise, and relaxation tend to be the first activities forsaken (Forssén & Carlstedt, 2006; Hochschild, 1997; Schor, 1993; Widerbeg, 2006). People develop tendencies towards unhealthy habits, drawn by the immediacy of faster, often harmful coping mechanisms.

The basic, uncontested pillars of healthy living are ample exercise and a healthy diet, but fast-paced bodies often get neither. Rushed bodies are more prone to rely on fast food. Where the tenants of healthy eating recommend plenty of vegetables, fruit, healthy fats and complex carbohydrates, fast food tends to rank as one of the most unhealthiest kind. Yet, freshly prepared, home-cooked meals are on the decline in favor of the supposed time-saving benefits of fast, pre-packaged and/or processed 'convenience foods' (Warde, 1999), which are less likely to have nutritional benefit, and more likely to be saturated with unnecessary fats, calories, salt, and sugars at detrimental levels. The fast food industry has doubled in the past 60 years, while the patronage of sit-down restaurants has decreased (Putnam, 2001). Yet, even many 'sit-down' restaurants rival the worst fast-food chains with their own artery-clogging items, and with fruits and vegetables only making an appearance within butter-soaked, sugar-laden breakfasts or desserts, or as cheese-smothered, ranch-drenched, and often fried side items. The ensuing cycle of poor dietary habits and sedentary lifestyles are main culprits of the increasing rate of obesity,

with its most dramatic climb being since 1985. In 2008 finding just one lone state (Colorado) reported an obesity rate of less than 20% (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC],2012). What would have been an absurd and sad thought even decades ago, childhood obesity is now pandemic, and forecasts assert that we have witnessed the birth of generations whose life-span will actually be shorter than their parents.

Also related to the short-term scope of accelerated lives, the appeal of the quick fix presents additional threats to well-being. The bond between stress and poor self-care habits increases the appeal and use of unhealthy instant gratifications, which in addition to excessive sugar, salt, and fat, includes caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, and drugs.

Quick-fix “solutions” present another potentially hazardous realm. The goal of weight loss in particular is often impatiently sought through a variety of quick-fix (often untested, unverified, and risky) solutions like weight-loss pills, crash diets, and fad exercise regimes, creating an unhealthy cycle of instability based upon instantaneous expectations (Agger, 2004). We are less likely to embark upon relatively slower journeys like exercise, meditation, and true relaxation to bring balance to our BMI or serotonin levels.

Intrinsically linked to overlaps between consumerism, bureaucracy’s profit motive, and the result of changing legislation, the skyrocketing rate of prescription drug use as a ‘sanctified’/doctor-supported trend is perhaps the most alarmingly brazen trend of the ‘quick-fix’ mentality (Rosenthal, Berndt, Donohue, Frank & Epstein, 2002; Hollon, 1999). From anxiety and depression, to restless legs, sexual issues, or excessive urination, it seems a pill exists for any problem a person might have. In weighing the risk of pharmaceutical quick-fixes, one need only flip through television channels past one in the morning to stumble upon at least one or two commercials for the law offices of fill-in-the-blank, offering to add your x-y-z disease to the class-action suit against x-y-z drug. Actually, one need not go beyond the commercials for most of these “solutions” to hear the litany of potentially irreversible damages acknowledged by the manufacturers themselves.

Related to the quick-fix, instantaneity-addiction, concerns about the generational patterns of deteriorating health point to the emergence of a particular brand of sedentary lifestyle. In addition to the factor that busyness can threaten the time available or reserved for healthy activity, our modern-day experience of time has laced the 'free time' we do recognize with a sense of urgency or draw to immediacy, leading to more instant, and likely more superficial, disengaged, and even mindless fillers. Robinson & Godbey (1997) report that the most drastic shift in Americans' time-use since the 1960s is in the exponential rate of television usage, which, by the 90s accounted for half of the average American's use of 'free time.' One anecdotal fact finds that we are much more likely to watch sports on television than we are to participate in athletic activity (Putnam, 2001). The growing rate of Internet usage through and since the 1990s has likely supplemented, if not added onto, the amount of time spent in sedentary recreation.²⁹

Accelerated, short-term time may shift the experience of free or leisure time, regardless of the amount of it, in that its fragmenting nature necessarily creates shorter pockets/experiences of duration. Whether the result of a quantitatively valid time-pressure scenario, or an enculturated, ADD'd sense of internalized fragmentation, the draw towards leisure or recreation in superficially engaging, short-term formats is easily pacified with satisfied with the television, even more so the internet, and especially portable devices like the smart-phone – capable of filling even the "dull" space of minutes or even seconds while waiting at a red light. We gravitate towards not just quick and mindless activity, but more multi-tasking and necessarily superficial possibilities for recreation. For example, we are more likely now to have the t.v. on a background noise, as one thing we are 'doing' amongst others, in addition to being

²⁹ A few statistics concerning the time spent with social networking alone: The amount of time U.S. broadband users spend communicating online has risen significantly in the last couple of years. In particular, Netpop's study found that time spent socially networking online has grown 93% since 2006 (Leggatt, 2009). In 2009, one study found that minutes spent on social networking sites in the US increased 83 percent over the previous year, with Facebook's status as the number one social networking site finding total time spent on the site increasing almost 700 percent from year the previous year, and Twitter as the fastest growing social networking site growing more than 3,700 percent (Xinhua News Agency, 2009).

more likely to channel surf than to devote our attention solely to the television or even to one television program (Putnam, 2001).

Of further implication is the suggestion that over-reliance on these forms may even reconfigure the accelerated person's definition of leisure and relaxation in equating it to superficially instantaneous stimulation and/or detachment. Where true relaxation provides both mind and body time to rest and replenish, these opportunities feel diminished as we have culturally leaned towards disengagement and inertia over rejuvenation as our prized forms of leisure (Agger, 2004; Forssén & Carlstedt, 2006; Putnam, 2001; Widerberg, 2006).

The appeal and ease of disengagement relates to the tangle between busied, stressed lives, and the detachment required by accelerated, short-term time. As the increasing sense of having more to do and less time necessitates furthered degrees of superficiality, we lose the ability to 'afford,' perhaps even practice, the time-intensity of engagement. It is not an unimaginable stretch that this requirement would come to erode the uniquely human capacities for critical thought (Agger, 1989), and even self-awareness, extending the consequence of time's manipulation from a sense of alienation for our labor, to our very selves (Sennett, 2000).

As Marx long ago observed, the commodification of time forms a basis for alienation from work, and ultimately from our sense of selves as producers. The current evolution of capitalism as one with an exponentially faster, shorter-term drive has displaced the sense of pride once attached to life-long skill development and craftsmanship, wedging an even wider divide between ourselves and our work (Agger, 2004; Sennett, 2000). As the example of Rico portrays, the detachment characterizing the short-term work-world comes to permeate other aspects of life, even one's own identity.

Families & Relationships

As is true for the realm of self-care, the perception of having less time can also yield less time spent with friends and family. Not only does 'having less' mean less is available for people in our lives, but

the cultural context of short-term time can shift the very foundation of relationships. Short-term culture threatens the framework needed for the development of long-term relationships. As mentioned in the example of Rico as a prime example of someone successfully playing by the rules of short-termism, such potential success can only be gained at the expense of long term values like trust, loyalty, and commitment: the basic blocks of relationship building. A change from life in mid-20th century, today's short-term reality has eroded the ability to perceive our relationships on a long-term trajectory. From the person who sells our groceries or delivers our mail, to co-workers, neighbors, and even the person we marry, the expectation of long-term constancy is no longer realistic.

As Agger (2004) articulates in the idea of the 'fast family,' busyness is not just an individual endeavor. As compared with the relatively slower pace of 60 years ago, and in line with the notion of voracious 'leisure,' the family today is more likely to represent a busied conglomeration of scheduled activities, homework, lessons, chores, and other extra-curriculars. In fact, one study based upon the observed daily experience of family life found the majority of participants' days wrapped up in the management of time through the according coping mechanisms of scheduling, prioritizing, anticipating, adjusting, and even worrying (Darrah, 2007).

As Hochschild illuminated in the identification of work as a potential respite from stress at home, as the boundaries between home & work and public & private have collapsed, the home as a setting of sanctuary and respite becomes further untrue. The blur of these parameters inciting the draw towards isolation as a coping mechanism also holds true for family life. Detachment from and superficial engagement with the family results in a situation poignantly portrayed by Agger (2004, p. 85):

The fast family doesn't commune. There is little connection. Meals are eaten out or brought in. There is little dialogue or discussion. The fast family is noisy and busy, but it is less verbal than families were before. Family members are monads: they plug in to their MP3 players; they watch television or videos on their own tv sets in their own rooms; they use computers to surf and chat in isolation. They even eat separately and on the run.

In terms of the family unit, Agger even argues that childhood risks extinction. Within the acceleration of time, he observes the drive towards the acceleration of childhood as transforming not only its nature, but perception of it as a sacred time worth the effort of protecting a place for outside of the busied adult world. The phenomenon of having more to do extends to children who are expected to do more homework and to be involved with more activities. Compared with their counter-parts in mid 20th century, children today have less time to play outside and ‘just be kids.’ We are witnessing the transformation of the very meaning of childhood, arguably reverting to pre-industrial notions of children as nothing more than small adults. Ominous forecasts suggest that the shift is not just a matter of “preparing children for adulthood” but of extending the latter at sacrifice to the former (Agger, 2004).

Another sad forecast for relationships in a short-term, accelerated world is their decreased ability to offer fulfillment. While lack of time threatens our ability to cultivate and strengthen the bonds of relationships, the accordant superficiality may render them less meaningful, even less desired. As a transformed version of ‘personal time,’ and a form of coping or even relaxation, detachment finds its complement in isolation. In the event of inability to isolate spatially, the creation of personal privacy may even come to rely on the practice of mentally ‘shutting off’ one’s body and mind from one’s surroundings - a tactic reported by the women in one study about their experiences coping with lack of time and privacy (Forssén & Carlstedt, 2006).

Thus, while the feeling of busyness itself can lead to less time spent with friends and family, short-term culture can change the very nature of relationships and the capacity to relate to others. From our spouse, families, and children, to our co-workers and neighbors short-term culture breeds an entirely different framework for relationships than was the case for preceding generations.

Community & Society

As a basic building block of community, the effect of time on relationships has a great impact on societal and communal functioning. The superficiality required of living in a short-term, accelerated world

negates the development of essential elements to strong relationships, not only in the life of the individual, but to the community as a group of which she is a part. The erosion of necessary bonds like trust, loyalty, and commitment threaten the bonds of community as they do for family and friends (Sennett, 2000). At a more macro level, the weakening of these bonds is linked to the depreciation of care (Adam, 1998; Hochschild, 1997).

Since mid-20th century, one of the most marked shifts in American culture has been the partnership between deteriorating social structures and the decline of community involvement. As trends with dire potential, they take center stage in Putnam's (2001) *Bowling Alone*, an investigation into 'the collapse of American culture.' He documents the pervasive expanse of communal weakening, from the political arena, to civic organization, religious participation, and beyond, supported by a comprehensively alarming range of statistics of which steep drops in PTA involvement, union membership, church attendance, local neighborhood watch groups, and volunteering represent only a sample. The pattern of declines, with peak involvement in the 1950s and 60s curtailing into a sharp and continuing decline beginning in the 60s and 70s, speaks to the generational nature of this shift. In breaking down decades of statistics into situational age-groups, Putnam shows that the changes indicate the deterioration of community in large part due to 'generational replacement,' and not to difference in stage of life or the accumulated effect through changes in the population's composition. The implication is that it is not people as individuals who are changing, but the character of society as a whole.

As Sennett highlights, the requirement of a fast-paced, short-term society devalues and voids the possibility of the long-term, and thus the development of trust, loyalty, and commitment as dependent upon this framework. The instability of the short-notice short-term world means uncertainty, which may instead serve to breed an antithetical aura of paranoia and suspicion. The importance of 'thin trust,' that held for the long list of others whom we surfacely encounter on a daily basis, is as important for communal connection and societal security as is 'thick trust' for the close personal relationships we maintain. Yet, whereas Americans in the 1950s were more equally divided in expressing confidence for

living within a trustworthy society and among honest, moral people, by the late 1990s, those without that confidence outranked those with it by three to one (Putnam, 139).

The idea of society, of communal living, necessitates a level of trust as a matter of peace as an ideal, and at the very least, a degree for functionality. Trust and cooperation represent a contiguous cycle (Gambetta, 1988). The current decline of perhaps reflects, not just inability, but desire. The changing nature of care provides additional considerations:

As Widerberg (2006) suggests, the contextual framings of the individual's stress to keep up with the speed of everyday life may indicate a transformation of our relationship to the very nature of care. As Hochschild elaborates in her work, "The commercialization of intimate life," the commodification of our personal lives and emotions has disfigured the act of care into a cost-benefit analysis. The idea of care has lost itself as it has its value as a not-for-profit venture. She articulates that, reduced to the necessity of the dollar, care becomes exploited, particularly as a service provided by low-wage workers who may find an adequate paycheck only through the outsourcing of time that could be spent nurturing their own families to instead care for others' children and aging parents.

Bringing us full-circle, Adam (1998) illuminates that beneath this transformation of care lays the gridwork of time, a common denominator whose basis is found in the ever-popular quip asserting that 'time is money.' It is within this equation that care loses its value. As time-intensive projects, trust and care become markers of inefficiency. As she details, neither make the grade in the time = money analysis. Yet, forebodingly, this simple statement most adequately sums up the direction and rationale behind our changing value structure, pointing to the prominence of time's reconstruction in this shift.

The shifting perspective of trust and care allude to one of the more prominent, and startling revelations about generational change across the past 60 years: the shifting of societal values. These transformations depict the relevance of this shift as one from a long to a short-term context. A poignant finding: freshman today are much more likely to value financial success than their past counterparts. In a longitudinal survey of college freshman, in the 1960s, the primary personal value was developing a

meaningful philosophy of life with 80% listing this facet as saying important or essential, versus only 45% listing being financially well off as essential or important. To compare this with results in the 90s: at this time, the top goal had shifted to being financially well off, with 75% responding with this answer, versus the only 42% with similar value for a sense of life philosophy (Astin, 1998).

A study conducted by the Pew Research Center (2007) found that for the group referred to as 'Generation Next,' (those between the ages of 18 and 25 at the time of the study in 2007), 81% reported getting rich as the first or second most important value for those in their generation, whereas 29% ranked helping those in need, and 22% ranked leadership in the community as meriting the same degree of value. Other findings echo the sentiments of a shifting towards more quantified value. The Higher Education Research Institute (2007) concurred with the finding that in 1968, nearly 90% of surveyed students cited "developing meaningful philosophy of life" as a top value, whereas in 2006, this number had dropped to less than 50%. Relatedly, whereas only 40% cited "being very well off financially" as a prized value, this number had jumped to over 70% by 2006. This shift is complemented by findings of increasing narcissism across the same period. The substantial increase in narcissistic attitudes (as expressed by college students) from 1979 to 2006 suggests this characteristic as the largest influence over generational patterns, even more influential than gender (Twenge et al., 2008).

In these last examples, the shifting towards quantitative value, i.e., monetary value, is quite blatant. Although less directly with the greater list of examples, they all convey the superficiality of short-term's quantification. The more qualitatively complex values of just generations ago: the development of a meaningful life philosophy, serving those in need, and community leadership, have been usurped by the more surface goals of financial success, personal profit, and the focus on self-interest. The values of Enrico's generation: stability, commitment, engagement, community, and delayed gratification, have been supplanted by the necessarily superficial values of immediacy, flexibility, and adaptability. As seen through the example of Rico, the conflicts of these short-term values within the human experience of life, as a trajectory or cohesive narrative, can initiate an unsettling, fragmented, disconnected feeling for the

individual. The individual's experience as an effect of short-term culture, seems to follow by feeding back into the loop. Reciprocation follows in the individual's disruptive experience in turn aggregating to relationships with family, and friends, and in turn, onto community and society.

These experiences coalesce as a matter of time: of life in an accelerated, short-term world: a world that suggests a shifting of value towards quantity, at the expense of quality.

Quality Time (Research Question)

As sides of a conventional coin, the relationship between quantity and quality finds its overlap with the temporal experience of modern America. Linguistic subtleties spotlight the enmeshed division of time into qualitative and quantitative assessment, suggesting reflection of an increasingly 'quantified time' experience as the means for the conception of a "quality time."

Quality time is an American term that emerged in the 1970s. Its origin points to its use in a 1973 Maryland newspaper article entitled "How to be liberated"³¹ –

The major goal of each of these role changes is to give a woman time to herself, Ms. Burton explained. "A woman's right and responsibility is to be self fulfilling," she said. She gives "quality time" rather than "quantity time" to each task, whether it be writing, cleaning the house or tending the children.

The term is a curious one, a linguistic evolution against anachronism. Like the distinction of 'rotary phone' or 'woman doctor,' its coinage designates the loss of some previous norm, rendering clarification necessary. Language as the ultimate social reflection of discontinuous experience (Zerubavel, 1993, p. 77) bases the need to recognize, separate, and categorize *certain* segments of time as quality as the result of an experience from which it need be differentiated. The notion of labeling portions of time as "quality" begs the question of what this implies for everything left over. That the term was absent for

³¹ Phrase Finder: <http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/297250.html>; Reference Answers: www.answers.com/topic/quality-time

past generations and would be an ungraspable concept for many other cultures today suggests something particular to the changing nature of time in the latter half of 20th century America.

The term quality time emerged alongside two important cultural shifts playing a particular role in the changing ways Americans spent their time. The first was the entrance of women into the work-force in unprecedented numbers. The shift meant less time for women to take with the child-care and household responsibilities once relegated to the realm of the house-wife/stay-at-home-mom, thus infringing upon the arguable 24-requirement of this role. Some assert that this unpaid work has grown towards a more equal distribution between parents (Robinson & Godbey, 1997), while many others find a disproportionate burden remaining for women, even those in dual-headed households (Forssen, et al., 2006; Hochschild, 1997; Hodgson, et al., 2001; Warren, 2003). In either case, the past four decades have witnessed an increase in employed women, and a paralleled increase of dual-earner and single parent households: shifts undeniably resulting in less time available for the family (Council of Economic Advisors, 1999). Emerging concern about 'quality time' for the family followed a similar pattern.

The drastic change for women's use of time additionally implicated a shifting orientation towards its perception. As women found themselves outside of the home, the task-orientation of this realm³² was crowded-out through the aggression of a bureaucratic value system based upon speed and busyness as measures of efficiency and generators of profit. The increased possibility for women to achieve financial self-sufficiency contributed to the increase in divorce, leading a cycle of dependence on paid employment through the creation of more single-parent families.³³ The realm of paid employment, to which the commodification of time is often linked, became increasingly central to a rising percentage of Americans, designating the reconfiguration of many women's daily lives towards it.

³² As Thompson (1967) emphasizes, child-care in particular is a quintessential example of task-orientation – a context in which attention is necessary to the moment at hand, regardless of the schedules or significance of the time on the clock.

³³ A group particularly vulnerable to feelings of time-scarcity (Council of Economic Advisors, 1999; Robinson & Godbey, 1997)

The emergence of the television accounts for the second critical change in time-use around the emergence of term quality time. Robinson & Godbey's (1997) longitudinal investigation into the ways that Americans spend their time finds use of the television the most drastic change in daily time-use across the past 60 years. Since its entrance into the household, this increasing center of entertainment had come to account for 50% of Americans' free time by the 1990s. However, the evolving relationship of television to time extends beyond a change in the partitioning of time. An increase in usage also signaled a paralleled change in the *way* it is watched.

Once regarded as a type of event – perhaps an opportunity for a family gathering – by the 1990s television viewing had become most likely to be an activity of solitude, often as background noise amongst doing other things, and to be 'channel-surfed' instead of watched (Robinson & Godbey, 1997; Putnam, 2001). With hundreds of channels available around the clock, the television has outpaced its own potential,³⁴ and fitting itself into a self-perpetuating box of accelerated, discontinuous, short-term time,³⁵ it has become a passive background for the realm of multi-tasking, a playground for short-term attention deficits, and a relatively easy outlet for mind-numbing detachment.

Since the 1970's and the unfolding of these two factors, the term quality time has exploded in use. It has also condensed in meaning, especially across the past two decades. A search of the term in popular newspapers and academic databases finds its sharpest increase in use after 1990, with newspapers witnessing a jump of nearly 12 times and academic articles over 100.³⁶ Today, the term appears in headlines such as "Families urged to spend quality time together," "Soldier on leave spends quality time with sons," and the more startling "Maid to mother: With parents unable to spend quality

³⁴ See Sennett (2007) for consideration of the inflated value of potential within the "new culture of capitalism" – both in terms of individual value (the value of potential over accomplishment) and the value of products (the value of potential over need/function).

³⁵ Even fade-out screens between programming and commercials faced a progressive extinction as a means to maximize time and provide continual, uninterrupted, unrelenting stimulation (Gleick, 2000).

³⁶ Lexis Nexis, Ebscohost, and Infotrac comprised the newspaper databases searched. This search cited the use of the term 'quality time' a total of 30 times up through 1989 and 4,128 times from 1990 to 2008. Ebscohost, CSA, JStor, Biblioline, and Proquest provided citations of its use in academic articles, with 720 found through 1989 and 8,477 between 1990 and 2008.

time with their children, are domestic helpers filling mothers' shoes?"³⁷ It is even the title of a parenting magazine based in the United Kingdom.³⁸ Where it may have emerged a more general assessment of time (and of life), it has popularly narrowed to a label to describe time spent with others, often one's own children.

When academically considered, the idea of assessing the quality of temporal experience frames research on interaction and relationship development, most often between parent and child. Research on quality time [and variants such as 'precious time' (Hodgson et al., 2001) and 'quality moments' (Kremer-Sadlik, 2007)] often sets about its measurement and discussion within the problematized framework of time-poverty (or one of its variants) to express concern for the lack of 'quality time' shared between parent and child. Only rarely are observations made about the curious nature of the term.

Yet, a semblance of microcosmic worlds, the realm of language forms vast fields of insight across the cloudy layers between person and civilization. It cultivates curiosities particular to the nature of time's centrality today and its relevance to social evolvment. That time is 'spent,' that it is talked of as being used, wasted, saved, served, lost, killed, made up, raced against, even borrowed, bought, paid, or invested, speaks unspoken volumes. Phrases like 'multi-tasking'- originally a descriptor of a computer function, 'time-saving'- as a beneficial attribute emerging alongside the Internet in the 80s, and of course 'time is money'- all signify underlying shifts in perception of time. The disguise of linguistic subtlety signals the depth of implication for time's commodification as a synthesis of individual and society.

As a possibly pinnacle term to signal time's intensifying quantification, the notion of quality time has been predominantly perpetuated rather than questioned. Instead of bringing pause to the weight behind it as a warranted descriptor, the notion of 'quality time' often provides only another way for it to be measured and categorized. Usually, it plays mere mention within the framework of busier lives as a

³⁷ Hull Daily Mail, 5/06/2009, p. 21; Jacksonville Journal-Courier (IL), 9/12/2009; South China Morning Post, 2/16/07, p. 2

³⁸ <http://www.qtmag.co.uk/index.htm>

threatened notion. When given the floor, it is often one in which the sentiment is supplanted within and restricted to the domain of the child-parent relationship.

The only attention to the peculiarity of the term itself charges the 'quality time' label as a parental defense mechanism, an assuagement of guilt for not spending more time with one's children. This critique provides an initial spark of curiosity for the problematic idea that the lack of time in quantity can be compensated for with an extra layer of quality. Yet, it only hints towards the implications of time's shifting construction, which the term clarifies as a confusion between quality and quantity.³⁹ There is much left to explore.

³⁹ See Agger (1989) for a discussion of how the force of acceleration driven by capitalism has a special hand in this confusion

CHAPTER III

METHODS & LITERATURE

Research Focus

Given the indicated need for the qualitative consideration of time, this study undertakes that aim. This research intends to follow Gershuny's (2005) suggestion to look beyond the numbers, to instead explore a possible shift in subjective experience based upon changing, temporally-based values, and to use the lead of folks like Agger and Sennett who have recognized the vital interplay between cultural and subjective/personal time. In seeking guidance towards this exploration, Rosa's (2009) model of the accelerated society provides a framework for making sense of this dynamic of temporal experience. In highlighting the significance of the cultural and economic motors on the increasing pace of life, the phenomenon of social acceleration is consistent with an emerging niche, mirrored in the works of Marx and Thompson, Agger, and Sennett, and Adam and Hochschild, pointing towards the significance of this interplay for the shifting temporal experience in the Western world.

Within this niche, the notion of time's equation to money continually asserts itself as the significant link. The implications of the equation suggest a common theme of a "quantified time," or a temporal perception as based upon quantified values, short-term contexts, and accelerated, superficial frameworks. Thus, as an integration of the suggestion to follow qualitative pathways to understanding the significance of modern temporality, and the complementary indications of a greater shifting towards quantitative perceptions of time across the past 60 years, the notion of Quality Time grounds the present study.

As a linguistic, and thus more natural, less guarded reflection of temporal experience, the focus on quality time not only goes beyond numerical considerations, but reaches towards a deeper, further ingrained, and less filtered layer of experience. The qualitative format of the interview structured the

study's intention to unfold the experience of time beyond numerical and categorical borders: to invite participants to talk through it, not just about it. The pursuit of relevance to a generational shift sought the inclusion of two interview groups, representing the tails of a potentially temporal divide. The choice to utilize the setting of higher education to recruit participants provided the identity of these groups as "the students" and "the professors," and additionally provided the opportunity to elaborate upon the relationships between temporal perception and higher education. To elaborate on the research focus, this piece considers the operationalization of quality time, the pursuit of a generational approach, and the context of higher education, including research questions pertaining to each topic. The methods section will then conclude with a brief but detailed look at the methodology of this study before moving on to findings.

Operationalizing Quality Time

An amorphous measure, the conception of quality time for this study aligns with its earlier, broader use, in representing that considered most fulfilling, satisfying, and/or beneficial. The subjectivity of this scope allows for personal interpretation, and intended to invite the participants' personal reflections on the value of time, perhaps even life.

In an effort to avoid the potential suggestion of possibly laden terms/categories associated with time ('work time,' 'free-time,' 'busyness/hurriedness'), the interview protocol allows participants to provide and use their own terminology of time. Accordingly, although the concept chosen to convey the spirit of this research, the term 'quality time' is never actually introduced during the interview process. The participants only knew of the study's focus on the individual experience of time generally. It was only within the more general discussion on the role and perception of time in one's life that elaboration was sought towards the question of what the interviewee considers to be personally fulfilling or satisfying time, and "temporal terms" were only used when mirroring that first provided by the interviewee.

In perceiving the interview process as ideally engaged, it was intended as a forum, rather than investigation. By posing the notion of time in a relatively generic sense, and in allowing some flexibility in the development of its exploration, the hope was to invite an unguided, naturally unfolding narrative on the subjective experience of time, and with it, the personal values attached to its perception. With regard for the interview as a form of an in-the-moment creation between interviewer and interviewee (Holstein & Gubrium, 2006), they were approached as opportunities for a shared step beyond the 'local-ness' of knowledge.

Following the focus on quality time, the research questions underlying it inquire:

- **What is quality time? How do people define it ?**
 - What does this indicate/how does this add onto the study of time's increasing importance to today's world?
- **What is quality time for individuals today?**
 - For those in a seemingly accelerated, faster-paced, shorter-term world, what does it suggest about temporally aligned values such as busyness, or even superficiality? What might it imply about an accordant 'quantified' experience as the necessitated counterpart of quality time?

Generational Approach

A generational approach provides a scope for the exploration of shifting temporal perception, and perhaps quality time, across time. This approach was utilized to provide ways to explore the suggestion of such a shift as an apt caricature of the changes in American society since mid-20th century. To develop this angle, two groups were sought as representing ends of an arguably still-unfolding transformation.

In the context of popular generational breakdowns, those born within the past 60 year scope of relevance for this study include the Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964), Generation X (generally thought of as born in the 60s and 70s), and Generation Y (generally thought of as born in the 80s and 90s). This study aimed to recruit participants representing the Baby Boom Generation and Generation Y.⁴⁰ In skipping a generation (Generation X), this comparison between groups representing the ends of a roughly 50-year spectrum yields an appropriate span for the trickling effect of social change at the inter-generational level (Putnam, 2001).

Those born in the 50s and 60s, at the end of the Baby Boom, experienced childhood in a culture of relative stability, and parenting by a generation whose adulthood had been reached in a height of stable, predictable, linear time (Sennett, 2000, 2007) (which, given the turbulence surrounding the Great Depression, was a welcomed sense of security for many). They came of age in the 60s and 70s, an era that despite its characterized rally against structure, found its rebellious sentiment born from a framework of deeply-rooted, stable time. People were motivated to rally for social change due to faith that their actions today could influence the shape of tomorrow - - this perceived connection between present and future representing faith and grounding in a sense of temporal linearity. Based upon hope for the future, faith in that link across yesterday, today, and tomorrow invigorated mass social movement, and stands in contrast with the kaleidoscopic experience of anxiety for the future today.⁴¹

Furthermore, that desire to share in and take effort towards the vision of a collectively positive future conveys a sense of rooted-ness, of bigger-picture connectedness -- a climate whose descent into fragmentation today (as suggested by Sennett and others) suggests a striking parallel with 'the collapse of American community' and the generational shifting of values. The predominating value of personal life-

⁴⁰ While Generation Z is sometimes considered to include those in the latter group [of students born in the early 90s], generally, the lines of demarcation between Generations X, Y, and Z are not exact. This study will use the described parameters as its generational guide.

⁴¹See Sennett (2007) for distinction between anxiety and dread: "Anxiety attaches to what might happen; dread attaches to what one knows will happen. Anxiety arises in ill-defined conditions, dread when pain or ill-fortune is well defined. Failure in the old pyramid was grounded in dread; failure in the new institution is shaped by anxiety" (p. 53).

philosophy in the 1970s umbrellas the cohesive capacity of personal narrative; it suggests not only sense of personal purpose but also a broader sense of meaning, the reverence of engagement underlying the exercise of citizenship.⁴²

Although generations growing up in the 60s and 70s grew up alongside the changing nature of time, their memory of stable time (in the 'iron cage') as lived experience is a marked distinction from the experience of those in transition to adulthood today (who have no memory of this experience). The earlier experiences of the former group mark clear precedents to the exponentially climbing rate of change during the 80s and 90s. With the drive of technological advancement, and the Internet in particular, accelerating modes of communication, production, and information pushed beyond boundaries of time at an unrivaled pace. Perhaps at a rising crescendo of a dialectic intensification of time fragmentation and commodification, this period bears the first generational waves entirely removed from the experience of continuous time, or that experience of a temporal trajectory framed by linearity and discipline. Especially due to the public launching of the World Wide Web in the early 90s, those born in this era, or at the tail-end of 'Generation Y,' represent the first group for whom life will unfold totally submerged in the accelerated, short-term experience of time. These two groups thus represent drastically contrasting temporal experiences.

Although an ideal comparison across generations would compare longitudinal data as gathered across decades – so as to capture the pictures *within* their context – the availability of temporally-relevant, longitudinal data tends to be quantitative in nature (e.g., time-use studies). Thus, unable to interview undergraduates in the 50s/60s to compare them with their counterparts today, an alternate approach was followed in interviewing the adults today who were those undergraduates then. Of course, a major flaw presents itself with the potentially blurry lines between the distinctions of generation versus age or stage of life. In other words, a point-in-time generational comparison runs the risk of confusing

⁴²The picture of this linearity, however, is not meant to romanticize or represent the entire reality of this era, but finds its importance to this study for the proposed comparison of temporal perception across generations.

differences in age (or stage of life) for generational differences. A minimization of this risk is hoped for in having set up a backdrop of data which is available, at least suggesting the temporal context of the past upon which their current experience may be built.

In accordance with these points of interest, the following questions frame the generational scope of this study:

- How has the notion of quality time **changed across time**, and what might this link imply about the evolving perception of time as a personal and societal construction?
 - a. How do the generations differ in their evaluation? Does the earlier generation reflect a valuation of ‘slowness,’ and if so, what does this indicate about a shifting in time experience: What are the characteristics of this ‘slower-pace? Is it perceived as in contrast with a broader sense of acceleration? Is there a sense of assimilation’s demand? Is quality time perceived as needing guard or a reliable facet of life experience? How does this contrast with the young generation of students?

The Realm of Higher Education

Not just a convenient context, the arena of higher education also stands relevant as an institution heavily influenced by temporal perception. Changes in the realm/functioning/management of academia across the past 60 years point to parallels with notions of time’s quantification, and specifically that equation of time to money. As one example, in response to the boundaries of time and space as cyclically broken by increasing social acceleration, increased adoption of technologically advanced possibilities for information and communication has extended to academia the short-term possibilities of interaction and exchange absent to past generations. As speedier and spatially flexible options like accelerated programs,⁴⁴ distance-learning degrees, and online: courses, libraries, and interfaces like

⁴⁴ ECPI’s notorious ‘zero to bachelors (in 2.5 years);’ The University of North Carolina at Greensboro’s “UNCG in 3” program

Blackboard become standardly available (even mandatory) components for academic processes,⁴⁵ the on-goings of the university can be painted as a context in transition. Yet, although the realm of technology may offer the most blatant parallel between the shifting of time and that of the university, further consideration reveals a deeper relationship.

The realm of higher education as an appropriate site to study changing temporal perception finds further validation in this shift's influence over those within it. The changing value of time finds this context particularly salient in relation to the idea of social capital. The emerging value of busyness is a particularly true sentiment for those of higher social capital, with those most apt to be facing a quantitatively genuine time deficit including segments of the population with relatively great/high socioeconomic means, professional status, and education levels (Robinson & Godbey, 1997; Gershuny, 2005; Hochschild, 1997). That both students and professors are linked with the academic world relates closely to each of these three components, with the last as the strongest parallel between the groups, and the others most salient for the professors as individuals and for the students as located within a family unit.

As a setting accountable for the education of future generations, the changing face of academia as explored through a temporal lens calls forth a poignantly relevant dynamic between quantity and quality. The most striking trends in higher education across the past 60 years find a running parallel between the shifting of temporal values and the transforming university. Three primary markers of the latter's evolution illuminate the insidiously linked former. Across the past decades, the predominating trends in higher education find expanding enrollment rates, increasing tuition costs, and a resultant shift in the faces of the student population. More young Americans are now attending college than their counterparts in mid-20th century America and in many societies abroad. However, the increasing cost to the student over the past 30 years may find a reversal of this trend across the decades to come. Tuition rates have launched an exponential hike over this period, "have increased an average of 234% overall

⁴⁵ Now, even ipads are becoming a necessity of education (see Smith, 2011).

since the early 1980s,” and have continued to rise over the past decade (Aronowitz, 1998, p. 33; O’Neill, 2007).

An ability afforded (at least) in part by increasing enrollment, the subsequent trends of increasing tuition in tandem with decreasing opportunities for financial aid (O’Neill, 2007), is constructing a selective measure against this rising rate (as well as leaving many students in debt for decades to come; see Lieber, 2010). These responses are not only putting the breaks on the previously increasing rate of enrollment, but by setting restrictions financially, they are setting disproportionate impediments for lower classes. The Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles, (Hurtado & Pryor, 2007) has confirmed a widening income gap between students and non-students as the driving shift in the transformation of the student body across the past 40 years. It finds the 2005 freshman median family income “60% higher than the national average,” as compared with 1971’s median at 46% higher. Attention calls to the years between 1983 and 1987 as a span of particularly sharp discrepancy between the rise of median incomes of student families and that of the national average (Marklein, 2007; O’Neill, 2007).

As a summary of these trends, in and of itself, the drastically increasing proportion of Americans pursuing post-high school education since the mid-20th century hints at changes in the significance of a college education and the mission/management of academia (including the admissions process). Subsequent increase in tuition rates and decline of financial support casts into curiosity the motivation of academia’s resultant evolution. The result of socioeconomic status as an important indicator of student status is a logical result of this combination, but begs the question as to the logic constructing the context behind the very equation.

Though the result of these factors may submerge enrollment rates to numbers similar to past decades, a fundamental difference is in the basis of selection. As merit-based incentives have

deteriorated and financial wealth⁴⁶ has become a determinant to college admission over intellectual ability, the suggestion of a reconstructed road to higher education on the basis of monetary capacity calls to the equation between time and money and alludes to a bigger-picture shift from quality to quantity.

These predominating trends in the changing nature of academia may not only reflect an effect of a larger, cultural shift of temporal perception towards quantification but, as a core institution to the foundation of democracy, these academic shifts suggest a potentially causal origin of temporal influence as well. These trends ominously pose the question as to whether a short-term agenda towards quantifiable gain has supplanted the long-term goal of educating future citizens.

Giroux (2003) articulates this relationship of academic change to the quantified value of time using the concept of 'corporate time.' The descriptor conveys an orientation towards and resultant experience of time as based from within the tenants of efficiency as per the corporation. It is characterized by the perception of time as a perpetually ripening opportunity for profit, embodied in a hurried sense of constancy, and driven by cost-effectiveness and obedience. Framed in opposition to personal time or the democratic exercise of public time, corporate time lacks the capacity for such engagement – it instead functions in short-term distractions, in constant look-out for new possibilities and ways to maximize efficiency, continually anxious for those potentially passed-by, and cyclically perpetuated through a self-feeding cycle of increasing desire and unattainable achievement.⁴⁷ Its underlying mantra of time's equation to money rings alarmingly true with the reality of higher education's changing face.

In the name of speed and quantity as efficiency (time as money), the sacrifice/devaluation of time-intensive processes like engagement, reflection, and critical thought threatens to undermine the university's very purpose. Nearly a decade ago, Aronowitz (1998) reported an emerging trend for which

⁴⁶ Due to the transformation into a short-termed culture, the face of financial wealth itself has undergone change as well, from the 'old rich' who either generated their own wealth in a personal manner or had inherited such wealth, to today's "new rich," more based upon short-term profits (Gershuny, 2005), with today's rich an even different kind of rich, more bent on materialism, being showy, etc. (Fabrikant, 2005).

⁴⁷ Sennett's discussion of the 'all-consuming passion' elaborates upon this self-perpetuating phenomenon as housed within 'The Culture of the New Capitalism' (2007)

“all over America what was once the hidden curriculum – the subordination of higher education to the needs of capital – has become an open, frank policy of public and higher education” (p 32). Being taunted with the golden carrot of funding, he explained that “those [universities] who choose to remain aloof from the new regime risk extermination or marginality” (p. 32).

Accordingly, the value of the professor role has constricted to a quantifiable cost-benefit analysis. Whereas this analysis seeks students based on finances, not skill or intelligence,⁴⁸ it similarly seeks lower-cost professors. The transforming face of university professors finds rising numbers of part-timers and decreasing tenure track pursuants, implying the quantified value of short-term, loosely attached employees, (with professors representing outgoing instead of incoming funding) in sacrifice to/disregard for their value as educators (Aronowitz, p. 34). The quantified value of the professors is evidenced in other measures as well. As thinking, creativity, and other such non-material concepts become inefficient, faculty will experience new restrictions to their professional agency and academic freedoms (Goodell, 2005). Especially under the pressure of tenure, research ideas may be stifled and particularly guided towards profitable avenues (Kyle, 2005). As institutes of higher education come to maintain more financially-based corporate ties, they may find themselves influenced and even restricted by corporate interests.⁴⁹ Under this model, orientation between faculty members can shift from colleagues to competitors, and as Giroux (2003) expresses: “caught on the treadmill of getting more grants, teaching larger classes, and producing more revenue for the university, faculty become another casualty of the business ideology” (p. 151).

The influence of quantified value further bleeds into the learning process itself. Cuts to sections and an increasing student/teacher ratio are not conducive to learning or the encouragement of the

⁴⁸ As, even the success with supposed tests of intelligence like the SAT or GRE are largely correlated with extraneous factors including financial status .

⁴⁹ Fox (1997) demonstrates an example at Loyola University New Orleans, an institution that accepted contributions from the notoriously unscrupulous corporation Freeport McMoRan – funding that was dependent upon making company a representative the chair of their Environmental Communication committee, despite their environmental hazardous-ness - a position/financial string consequentially wielded by the corporation in attempts to stifle protesting at the school

educational relationship between student & professor. In order to encourage increased enrollment without having to hire more faculty, the university needs the professor to have the ability to provide service to as many students as possible. To “efficiently” deal with larger class sizes, the implementation of new technology, as example, can radically alter the classroom setting and learning experience. Bérubé (1998), professor of English, articulates:

When you’re “teaching” 10,000 students by satellite or over the Internet, there’s no way you can read and grade their papers, counsel them on their courses, or write them letter of recommendation for jobs and postgraduate programs. Personal, individual contact with students is one of the most costly and inefficient services a university can provide. It is also one of the most valuable- and most educational (p. B5).

In necessarily adding the process of critical thought onto the pile of inefficiency, the university confirms a permeated adoption of short-term values at threat to its very core. The combination of increasing enrollment and rising tuition suggests a movement towards student selection based upon money, not ability; the foreboding suggestion takes on a further ominous tone in considering the university’s subsequent move.

In acquiescence to the premium of the dollar over intellectual ability, the university has lowered its standards for the latter. The increasing trend of grade inflation is found in a combination of increasing grade averages and deteriorating academic habits. For example, the U.S. Bureau of the Census reports that “in 1980, only 27% of college freshmen reported an A average in high school, but by 2004 almost half (48%) reported an A high school average” (Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell, & Bushman, 2005). The Higher Education Research Institute reports that, in 1966, 48% of students reported being late to class in high school, whereas this number had risen to 61% by 2006 (Hurtado & Pryor, 2007, Slides #20). Study habits are on an eroding path, with the percent of students reporting studying for a minimum of six hours a week as high school seniors dropping from nearly half in 1987, to barely above 30% by 2005, not even twenty years later (Slides #21). A seeming deception, the level of academic self-confidence expressed by students is, however, on the rise, with nearly 70% of students ranking their academic self-evaluation as

above average (Guess, 2007). Yet, perhaps the most revealing signifier is found within the changing value of a college education for the students seeking it. While in 1976, only half of the students expressed attending college towards the aim of making more money, that number had reached nearly 70% by 2006 (Hurtado & Pryor, 2007, Slides #32).

The realm of education is not only an applicable site for the study of shifting temporal value, it is one of great importance for the public sociologists' concern. An institution founded upon the ideals of knowledge and learning as intended to nurture the self-awareness and critical thought of emerging adults, it is perhaps the most crucial component to a capable citizenry, and a genuinely functional democracy. The engagement required of developing the critical thought process, and its heightened vulnerability to the compression of time into quantified form, thus render academia an unignorable relevant link between the changing nature of time perception and the unfolding of society at large.

The layer of this study as situated within the realm of higher education accordingly angles this exploration of 'quality time' towards the following questions:

- In association with roles particularly prone to the value of quantified time, how do these groups of students and professors define, perceive, and experience quality time in their lives?
- What might their conception of quality time imply for the time-orientation of the academic setting in which their primary roles function?
- What does the comparison of quality time as defined across students and professors imply, not only as a comparison between those who were undergraduates in the 1960/70s and today, but also in reflection of the changing face of the university's changing temporal values?

Design

Participants

The data of this study is comprised of interview transcriptions from interviews conducted with participants recruited from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Volunteers were recruited

from students taking courses in and faculty from the social science departments. A total of 15 interviews were conducted: eight with students and seven with professors. The student group mostly fits into the span of Generation Y, with birth years ranging from 1983 to 1990 (with one unintended outlier at 1974 and half representing the span from 1988 to 1990). The group comprised two sophomores, two juniors, three seniors, and one (unintended) graduate student. Despite the intention to recruit professors born into the Baby Boom Generation (those between the years 1946 and 1964), the ultimate difficulty of finding volunteers within this restriction led to its loosening. Thus, while the majority does fit in this range, with four professors presenting a span from 1947 to 1960, two are younger and one is older (with the birth years 1977, 1976, and 1942).

Two outliers represent unintentional deviations beyond the intention to interview undergraduates and professors only. One of the students interviewed was mistakenly contacted. I contacted him based on his name appearing on the roster of professors teaching courses, not realizing he was a graduate student whose duties as a TA encompassed teaching courses. I also mistakenly contacted a retired professor, as her name was still listed on her former department's website as a faculty member. I did not realize either of these mistakes until reaching the point of interview, and so, chose to go ahead and conduct, and ultimately include both.

The Interview Protocol

The interview protocol was crafted by the guidance of four main topics: (1) the management/scheduling/organization of time, (2) personal content/types of time, (3) the evaluation/prioritization/ranking of time, and (4) opinions about time. After asking the interviewee for an introduction of themselves, the first question of every interview asked, "At the end of the day, are you usually feeling as though you had enough time?" The interviews unfolded from this starting point, with the tailoring of a bridge from the content of each response into and through the four areas mentioned.

By forming around individualized responses, each interview led its own course to some degree, but the four main topics designated basic questions that were asked of every participant.

Questions regarding the management of time asked the participants to outline and elaborate upon daily and weekly routines and schedules. During this exchange, attention was drawn to the mention of personal types or categorizations of time, when offered. Questions regarding the content of time requested further details about the content of offered schedules, routines, and types of time when mentioned.

Questions concerning the evaluation of time initially asked about the individual's process of prioritizing time as a means to ensure getting things done. Accordingly, participants were asked questions related to the ranking of daily and weekly tasks/routines. One example involves the hypothetical scenario of unexpected responsibilities crashing into a day's routine and asking what daily routines would first be sacrificed and what would be given up last in this time-crunch scenario. It is this arena of questioning, on the ranking or prioritization of time, which intended to zero in on pathways into the participants' personal definition of quality time.

As mentioned, as a means to avoid leading the interview, i never actually used the term quality time with the participants. Instead, to harken back to its original usage, i sought to explore the notion of quality time in inviting the participants to talk about the most meaningful or significant experiences of time in their lives. Other types of questions posed towards this discussion included asking for the participants' comparison between experiences of temporal awareness and unawareness, and for the response to the imagined scenario of unlimited "open-ended" time (or in other words, a stretch of time without schedules or routines). This aim further utilized cues from participants' own responses, with emphasis on using the participants' own terminology, when applicable.

The final component of the interview protocol asked the participant to provide their own opinions and observations about time personally, culturally, or socially. Questions included asking the participant to compare his/her sense/orientation of time to others in their lives, as well as with other

generations, like parents or children (or students). This concluding piece also invited participants to bring up any of their own ideas about time which had not been discussed during the interview itself.

Analysis

The data for analysis mostly comprised the transcriptions of the interviews conducted. Although personal notes were taken throughout the process, these were generally supplemental pieces of information, except for two situations in which a full transcription was prevented. Two transcriptions were incomplete due to unintelligible recording, one for a female student and one for a male student. In the case of the former, during the transcription the tape became partially eaten by the transcriber, and although it was managed back into an intact form, about two-thirds of the interview was gone, and i assume erased due to that incident. For the latter case, the tape was play-able but the sound almost seemed warped, with speeds slowing and quickening, sounding like hiccups, and rendering most of the recording undecipherable. Yet, despite these limitations, i nonetheless did choose to include the information i had from these interviews. While i did get some of the first interview transcribed, i mostly relied on personal notes for my references to these two cases in the analyses to follow. After each interview i made time to shortly there-after sit down and write out notes about the interview and my initial impressions. I mostly focused these notes around my ideas about the interview through the lens of quality time, but also viewing these notes as a process of brainstorming, i included anything i felt of interest. Thus, while i lacked the same degree of data for these two participants, i nonetheless felt that what i did have provided enough to be worthy of consideration.

After the fifteen interviews were conducted and transcribed, the transcriptions were analyzed using the qualitative software MaxQDA. A list of main themes taken from literature and aims reviewed up to this point developed the initial coding scheme. This list comprised the general themes: quality time, busyness, time and health, time and technology, time and generations, and time in the realm of higher

education. In venturing in to the coding process, this list grew with the addition of emerging themes of seeming significance: temporal agency, temporal boundaries, time and guilt, temporal vocabulary, the relation of time to identity, and temporal turning points.

The resultant bulk of intertwining sets of data led to a necessary prioritization of significance. While many of the expected focal points retained a place in the final analysis, the integrated re-assessment of relevant themes also took the study down pathways not initially intended. Although the final product deviated from original expectations, i regard it my best attempt at following what came to seem the most poignant pieces to an exploration of temporal experience through the framework of quality time.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Vocabulary of Time

In the effort to construct some sort of logical, insightful pathway into the idea of subjective time experience, the “vocabulary of time” frames a relatively objective, suitably tangible starting ground.⁵⁰ As the main heading of this initial piece on results, i have organized the topic around three subtopics: *talking about time*, *categorizing time*, and *implications of time*. A short explanation of this organizational schema first follows.

In initially approaching this section and searching for an appropriate starting point to explore participants’ “vocabulary of time,” a basic option of starting with direct references to time offered a concrete, comparably structured route. I thus made my starting place tracking down instances in which participants talked directly about time, as simply determined by the immediate phrases and contexts containing use of the word itself. However, a word with dozens upon dozens of definitions (dictionary.com reports 64), the rules of this criteria proved an easier task than the digestion and articulation of its results. Yet, two characteristics do dominate and accordingly form the first two out of three subtopics.

Although not mutually exclusive, the first two subcategories: *talking about time* and *categorizing time*, represent the most commonly direct references to time used by participants. The first considers the particular framing of time as a noun preceded by a verb (e.g., having/spending/making/wasting, etc.), or as an object to be acted upon. Consideration for the significance of this speech pattern is aided by the lens of language as a metaphor. The second subtopic, *categorizing time*, will focus on the designation of

⁵⁰ Relatively, in recognition for the unavoidable bias of the researcher/author/humanity

categories of time by characterizing or typifying with descriptors like ‘free time,’ ‘leisure time,’ and ‘personal time.’ For this discussion, i have focused on the three most seemingly prominent themes: categories of ownership, categories of content, and dichotomous categories. While the consideration of these time categories begins with specific references to time, i ultimately branch out to consider categories related to issues of temporality, yet not specified by the terminology. This branching out offers a segway into a third, concluding subtopic: *implications of time*. This final subtopic on vocabulary considers a set of emergent vocabulary themes not directly referencing time, but implicitly linked.

Talking About Time

This first subtopic considers the most common context of participants’ references to time: as a noun preceded by a verb, or in others words, as the object of some type of action or effort. While a pretty loose, and even bland definition, its significance weighs in through this basis of linguistic insidiousness. For example, here are some quotes from the interviews fitting this everyday type of criteria:

I think to myself, I’m just going to *waste my time* walking to the library from here.

At the end of the day I’m usually frustrated that I didn’t *have enough time*.

We have to *negotiate* a lot, *how we spend our time*, because she is not a morning person, and I am.

My boyfriend, for example, he gets things done. He’s a lot more productive when it comes to *using time efficiently*.

While, on the surface, these are phrases we likely hear and even use without great pause, i would like to call out the significance beneath such routinized patterns of speech, ultimately as representations of social negotiations about meaning, and accordingly, reflections of influence over perception and experience. Although the power of language was briefly considered in looking at the

meaning behind the notion of “quality time,” the interviews seemed to re-assert this message, broadening attention to the insight of the wider range of ways people talk about time. In coming to the actual analysis of these common, everyday ways of talking about time, their significance warrants fuller elaboration.

The task is aided by the ideas in *Metaphors We Live By* (2003). In this work, authors Lakoff and Johnson explore the notion of conceptual metaphors as central to constructing the perception and experiences of everyday life, with a focus on language as a reflection of the underlying metaphors that direct the way we think and act, as individuals and societies. They use culturally popular examples of speech to highlight core social metaphors, and use them to make and accentuate points throughout the book. Attention to the ingrained metaphors behind popular ways of talking about time provides an insightful perspective to the linguistic themes of this study’s textual analysis. Their particular consideration of the popular equation of time to money draws out that theme of quantified time as conceptualized throughout the literature review.

In considering the ways in which people tend to talk about time, the authors present a triad of metaphors at work, reflecting not just how people talk about, but also think about time. They consider this trio a system of metaphorical characterizations through which, from the top, “TIME IS MONEY entails that TIME IS A LIMITED RESOURCE, which entails that TIME IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY” (9). Whether having, giving, bidding, losing, wasting, or using time, everyday examples show this triad of temporal metaphors as the underlying framework for most of our references to time. They highlight the constellation as a particularly Western version of time, rooting temporal perception to the boundaries of dollars and costs.

Calling to cultural influences of commodification as detailed by Marx, these roots of quantified temporality are identified in the context of wage-labor: a context, we are reminded, far from universal:⁵¹

⁵¹ For other, contrasting examples, refer to Bourdieu’s (1963) description of Algerians, an account of the Lakota Tribe (Pickering, 2004) or Rosa’s (2009) mention of groups of deceleration in response to acceleration socially.

Time in our culture is a valuable commodity. It is a limited resource that we use to accomplish our goals. Because of the way that the concept of work has developed in modern Western culture, where work is typically associated with the time it takes and time is precisely quantified, it has become customary to pay people, by the hour, week, or year. In our culture TIME IS MONEY in many ways: telephone message units, hourly wages, hotel room rates, yearly budgets, interest on loans, and paying your debt to society by “serving time.” These practices are relatively new in the history of the human race, and by no means do they exist in all cultures. They have arisen in modern industrialized societies and structure our basic everyday activities in a profound way. Corresponding to the fact that we *act* as if time is a valuable commodity – a limited resource, even money – we *conceive of* time that way. Thus we understand and experience time as the kind of thing that can be spent, wasted, budgeted, invested wisely or poorly, saved, or squandered.

These metaphors thus overlappingly cast time into a limited and valued thing/resource – a more structural, more formulaic, even quantitative *thing* – as opposed to a more amorphous, qualitative, or conceptual abstraction such as experience. Examples of this type of language are found throughout the interview text. The opening examples of wasting, using, having, negotiating, and spending time provide a short list.

The conception of time as a resource further allows it to be “freed up,” as in the comment, “Facebook *freed up a lot of my time* because I don’t have to call people to find out how they’re doing.” The metaphor of time’s equation to money seemed especially overt in references to the value/worth of time: “If I can watch something that, you know, I conceived out of my own head, and then bring it to fruition, that’s *worth spending time on* and that’s pretty fulfilling.” The monetization of time is additionally seen in references to budgeting or managing time:

Because there came a point where I almost went nuts. Like, I didn’t *budget my time*. And now, I don’t have any time to do anything.

This has really made me grow up. I know how to *manage my time*, my money, and stuff like that. And I know what time and what money needs to go to what.

Many similar references additionally implicate the underlying linkage between these quantifications of time and the realm of wage-labor. For example, the suggestion of this link through the

conceptualization of 'earning time' as one would a pay-check, and by the sense of pressure to use time productively/efficiently:

I'm not sure exactly how I conceptualize free time, because, it's more like [small laugh] it's more like a pay-as-you-go kinda thing. Like, I can get this done and *open some free time* over here . . . but it's not like this work had . *earned me this time*. Although, that is sorta true to some extent . . .

But, I've also noticed how valuable that time is. Like, I, I started noticing that people, like kinda do their work before class, and I guess, actually, like *use their time* before classes. Whereas it used to be, I would, ya know, come to class, and just sit there and wait for class to be started. I would never *use that time productively*.

Again, these examples are fairly common phrases/ways of speaking about time. That participants talked about spending/wasting/saving managing/budgeting time is not exactly surprising news. The triad of temporal metaphors is not even a terribly surprising finding, especially due the nonchalant-ness with which the equation of time to money pervades our culture.⁵² The idea that 'time is money,' is such a popular saying, recognizing/finding that much of our language around time follows metaphorical suit is not any great cause of startle.

Yet, here lays the potency: the insidious power of habituated normalcy. The power of language is particularly steep in that in forming alongside its biases, its self-enmeshment creates a shield obscuring its own subjectivity. In other words, because language is routine, the metaphors which shape it become automatized and automatic as well – expressing reiterations becomes a non-thinking process that doesn't ask for much reflection. In this way, language is one of the most ingrained, invisible, and thus powerful conductors of conduct. It is not just that we come to verbalize these linguistic metaphors without pause, but that as early as we start to learn words, we start to live by them, to think, and even feel in accordance with them - to revolve existence through the invisible lenses they provide.

⁵² In other words, as an 'authorless text' as per Agger's (1989) conceptualization of such as those ideas portrayed/received as without an author or biased lens behind them , with a sense of authorless-ness as conveying (deceitfully) some notion or concept as though an objective truth.

In looking through the lens of metaphor, Lakoff and Johnson highlight that its linguistic influence parallels in its ability to conceal as much as clarify. In other words, in perceiving through the parameters of metaphor, the alignment of one thing with another can restrict as much as it can detail. As example, the authors offer the conceptual metaphor: ARGUMENT IS WAR. This metaphor casts the concept of argument as a process often perceived and talked about in terms of winning, losing, preparing, defending, etc. The dominant equation of argument to war thus also puts at risk the ability to talk about, or perceive, or even feel about an argument in other, especially antithetical terms, such as an opportunity for conflict resolution, or perhaps an exercise towards findings shared ground. Similarly, when time is money, it cannot be other things. When it is a limited resource, it cannot be plentiful; its use should be measured, monitored, and controlled. When it is a valuable commodity, it is not free; it is hard to conceptualize without a price-tag. As either, its waste or inefficient use should be avoided. Each insists upon a quantitative form appropriate to corresponding economic analyses, as the language of both resources and commodity tend towards the Westernized translation of currency.

Accordingly, to delve into the real impact of this metaphorical equation, when time is money, monetary increments represent the literal minutes of our unfolding lives. Time becomes an exercise in quantity; it is something to be owned and saved whenever possible, to be spent/invested only efficiently/wisely, something to avoid being owed or borrowed, something to budget in the name of efficiency/profit, and something not to be lost or wasted. When time is these things, it cannot be others. It cannot also be qualitative. It cannot be free, untethered, unowned. It cannot be limitless or unbounded. As the metaphor of time and money clarifies/reflects in its equation, it also does in the restrictions it implies; it conceals as much as it clarifies.

In regards to Doing More, the notions of time as commodity/resource/money/status/value seem the crux of busied feelings. Accordingly, the intensified experience of time seems a reflection of similarly quantified values: the ever-extending want to do more merely in order to do more as parallel to the infinite capitalist aim towards making more money in order to make more money (as per the examples

from Marx, Rosa, Sennett, Agger, the comparison between the new vs. the old rich, etc.). The association of busied time with high socio-economic status makes further, related sense through the equation of money and time. For example, the saying that someone's time is valuable evokes a monetary gauge in linking social importance with time-scarcity. That work has usurped leisure as a representation of status makes sense within the historical evolutions of industrialization and capitalism which find the ultimate value of money moving beyond itself, to an unachievably limitless gauge of reproduction.

In regards to having Less Time, the linguistic popularity of the metaphorical triad reflects the continual significance of Marx's thoughts on the commodification of time as a theory based on those very perceptions of time as a resource, as commodity, and/or as money. The model of social acceleration overlaps with the triad of temporal metaphors in finding the peaks of both as fixed within that equation of time to money. The acceleration cycle's economically (capitalist) impetus/drive towards evolvingly unattainable goals finds its own cycle of fuel and reflection in the very ways we speak. Throughout those considerations/implication of the everyday language of time runs that theme of quantification as a predominately powerful lens of temporality. Additionally, it is worth emphasizing that these popular examples also share in their contextualization of time as an object which is acted upon. Where time is used or wasted or gained, the dominant actor is not time, but (usually) the personal enacting these functions.

So, while the patterns of participants' talk about time is not surprising, it is from its very mundanity that its value resides. Any consideration for the language of time in America need further consider this predominating, underlying equation of time to money. Providing a summative perspective of implications pertaining to the type of expressions most common to talking about time, the notion of linguistically implied social metaphors offers a cultural backdrop for exploring the social layers of temporal experience.

Categorizing Time

Another prominent, though not entirely separate, feature of participants' talk about time shapes this second subtopic. The idea of time categorization encompasses this second most common theme to participant's vocabulary of time. The categorization of time refers to the articulation of some dividing line to distinguish, separate or typify segments of time, or to name/designate a span of time through descriptive markers. References made by participants to categorize time in this way cast a wide net of examples, ranging from the most common and culturally popular expressions like *free time*, *leisure time* and even *my time*, to more personal conceptions, like *peaceful time* and *rest time*.

The popularity of this form for talking about time is not an entirely separate consideration from the temporal metaphors just considered. Just as the language of having, using, or spending time relates to underlying social overlays with labor, wages, and money, so too, the parsing out of time into discrete components similarly casts temporal matters into divisible, clear-cut containments. The previously considered characterization of time as passive, as a subject to be acted upon, is what allows the perception of time as something to be categorized, managed, or parsed out into components. The underlying implication is time as a fundamentally quantitative form, one aligning with the meta-metaphor of time as money, as a thing capable of partition into cleanly separate, distinct, and summable segments.

In some form or another, all participants referred to at least one, but often several "categories of time." To navigate the discussion of this range of examples, i have focused on three emergent themes as appropriate (though not always mutually exclusive) and significant guides to this consideration: (1) categories of ownership, (2) categories of content, and (3) categories of dichotomy. The first considers the designation of time based on feelings of ownership, the second as based upon its content, and the last, as part of an antithetically divided whole.

Before getting into the more detailed examples of these themes, i would like to extend some quick words to introduce the format of discussion for the results from this point forward. In the interest of treating each participants' story as a packaged narrative (i.e., as difficult to adequately assess in

separation from its context), and to the intended benefit of this analysis, references to participants will designate each individually by a unique name. These references will not use real names, but will represent temporal monikers of sorts. These caricatured monikers intend to highlight predominating factors of temporal influence for each participant, and in naming each in this way, aim to provide a greater, more cohesive context of characters and narratives, as opposed to fragmented pieces of experience. Thus, in the discussions to follow, while each section (or subsection) is headed with a main topic of focus whose patterns will be considered throughout all of the interviews, these headings are also used to consider a handful of exemplary cases in further detail, thus providing not only introductory pieces of themes, but also the groundwork for the more cohesive (temporal) narratives each interview represents. To begin is the first subtopic of three: categories of ownership.

Categories of Ownership

The use of “time categories” finds its most prevalent theme in references to time categorized or designated in a way appropriately deemed “categories of ownership.” This label represents the use of terms which imply a sense of ownership or discretion over time. Working from the ground up, it grew from the observation of such high rates of usage for the terms “my time,” and “free time.” Related variants also abound, including phrases like: me time, time for me, personal time, and self time. While each may convey a slightly different sense, they converge in designating some degree of discretion and share the salient implication of personal possession.

Additionally and relatedly, these phrases are also trademarked in that their expression is often presented in direct or implicit distinction from an antithetical experience of time. Such antithetical experiences are described as time delegated to other responsibilities and/or reserved for other people. In this sample, these are often tasks or people related to the role of professor or student, and accordingly, circumstances where temporal designations and spatial requirements are perceived as more imposed

than chosen (such as class time, for both students and professors). Thus, the distinction of temporal ownership often finds its expression juxtaposed against a contrasting experience of its lack.

At least one variation of this vocabulary appeared in nearly every interview. Generally, the interviewees used such terms a handful of times through their interview. So its exponentially higher frequency within two particular interviews, at over 30 mentions apiece, called for extra attention. For the purposes of this study, these two cases are pseudonymed the Young Mother and the Young Professor. The relative magnitude of this rate alone creates curiosity for the temporal experiences and specific contexts of these two participants, and their stories will thus be considered in further detail next. Yet additionally, while it is not within the scope of this paper to fully address the array of potential implications, it is also worth noting the shared demographics of this pair of participants, in both being women, African-American, and representing the youngest of the student and professor groups respectively.⁵³

While the remainder of this section on categories of temporal ownership will be grounded in consideration for these two cases, a third participant - the Graduate Student - also merits a brief introduction as a relevant runner up in terms of the frequent use of relevant terminology.

The Young Professor

The Young Professor is so named as the youngest professor of the sample, at 33 years of age. To those familiar with the world of academia, her namesake may speak for itself in conjuring ideas on the importance she attaches to sense of ownership over time. Having recently graduated with her Ph.D., at the time of the interview she was in the middle of her first full school year as a professor and still facing challenges of adjustment in the transition from student to professor. With a primary interest in research

⁵³ At 20 years old, the Young Mother is tied for the youngest student in the sample.

and writing over teaching, she reported great difficulty in rationing her time amongst these tasks, often lamenting a perpetual lack for the former pair.

Overall, her relationship to time was predominately conflictual. She reported many challenges related to issues of “time management” and “budgeting time,” citing these as skills she would like to improve. She presents these challenges as longstanding. Though she feels she has nonetheless improved from her days as an undergraduate, making do with little sleep and lots of Mountain Dew, she expresses need towards further lessening the time-urgency she still experiences on a near-daily basis. The sense comes from finding herself repeatedly disappointed with the feeling that she must sacrifice time that could be utilized in other, more meaningful ways, to the sake of work. She elaborates upon this desire:

Just to re-allocate the time where I’m over-preparing for stuff, into times where, I’m actually going to get some benefit from that time. And so, I benefit – I have never regretted not working and taking some time to do something for me. And so, and I have regretted not doing something for me and spending that time with work . . . So, I should do more of those things I’m going to feel good about doing, and not the ones I’m gonna look back on and go like, you know, I could have finished grading those papers the next day. Instead of missing my friend’s little birthday get-together.

She additionally, and further urgently feels the need to change this scenario on the basis of very real, and undeniable physical consequences. To deal with the feeling of having too much to do and not enough time to get it all done, as is true for many, she finds herself sacrificing aspects of her health. She reports sleep as first on the chopping block, followed by a deteriorating diet, and a highly sedentary daily routine. She reports a common pattern towards working too much, sleeping too little, and over-relying on unhealthy crutches like caffeine until reaching the point of “crashing,” at which her literal exhaustion (sometimes compounded with other symptoms of physical sickness), leaves her no choice but to rest. Upon reaching such a point, she says it often takes several days of extended sleep for her to feel normal again. For the Young Professor, “my time” is an especially rare commodity, and thus highly valued.

Although she generally speaks of “my time” or “time for me” as that to indicate when she is not engaged in any type of work, these concepts were frequently presented in tandem (often in opposition)

with the time she is available to her students. She emphasizes the significance of “my time” as time outside this role, in addition to expressing frustration for not always feeling able to maintain such distance. As one preventative tactic, she reports clarifying this distinction and the importance of her “my time” directly to her students. She says, “So, I actually have, in the syllabus, this is how my time looks: I teach Monday through Thursday. Friday through Sunday is *my time* . . . This is on the syllabus. Cause when I say it, I mean that. So, this year I put it in my syllabus: do not expect me to do this, during this time. So, no, this is *my time*.”

Yet this period of Friday through Sunday as designated ‘my time’ seems more ideal than real as she later makes reference to her struggle at keeping just Saturday and Sunday work-free, which then even later dwindles to the often unsuccessful efforts at keeping Sunday “free.”⁵⁴ This ultimately leads to her more realistically based reflection that, on a regular basis, she often only finds herself taking time off from work in two scenarios: the one weekend a month when her significant other comes to visit, and the seemingly inevitable scenario in which she literally exhausts herself from too much work, too little sleep, and lack of self-care.

She elaborates upon the frustration for her own lack of boundaries as largely stemming from the instantaneity of technological advancements such as the internet, e-mail, and smartphones. She reports particular frustration with students’ according expectations of her virtual availability during evenings, nights, and weekends. She shares a “trick” she uses in effort to minimize this expectation: While she tends to stay up (and online) late at night and may often write responses to e-mails at one or two o’clock in the morning, instead of sending them at this time, she saves and waits to send them until standard business hours, so as to prevent creating the expectation of her extended availability.

Her emphasis on ‘my time’ as an antithesis to time available to her students further illuminates another component central to the notion of time ownership: control. Her sense of limited access to ‘my

⁵⁴ She also makes a comment about particularly associating Sunday with church, and in describing her family’s inability to understand her non-stop work schedule, provides an example of her aunt who throughout her life has avoided working on Sundays – not even laundry or cooking – as she does all this in advance to preserve Sunday as a type of holy day.

time' renders that temporal category one of high value, perhaps a personal version of quality time. It is with the aim of gaining greater control over her time that she so directly clarifies the parameters of the division between that which she considers her time and that when she is available to students. She expresses the importance of stating these boundaries up front, as she again emphasizes direct articulation to her students:

'I will check my e-mail from y'all Monday through Thursday. Friday I write and do research. If I can get to you, I can. If not, then do not expect me to e-mail you on the weekend. I just don't do it.' If somebody in class says, 'well can I get this to you on Sunday' – I won't get it til Monday morning, but sure. And they're like, okay. So, I just have to be better about putting those boundaries up. That if I don't control my time, everybody else is. And so, I had the feeling my first semester, everybody else ran my time, but me.

In this quote she suggests a distinction of ownership between the time she controls versus that controlled by others, again clarifying the importance of control and non-availability (or privacy) to her sense of 'my time.' As suggested by these two short snippets, the role of professor and its associated responsibilities – especially in regards to expectations of availability - seemed to play a primary role in this new professor's temporal perception as a framework dividing her temporal experiences between 'my time' and the implications of 'not my time.' As a seemingly central parameter to her overwhelming emphasis on the notion of time ownership, the designation of this participant by her role as the Young Professor seems appropriate in conveying the context of her temporal perception and influences.

The Young Mother

In addition to the Young Professor, the theme of temporal ownership was also relatively intense for the very first interviewee of this study, a 20 year old female student in her sophomore year. Tied as the youngest in the sample (with another female student), she is further distinguished as the only student participant also a parent, and as the only parent of a small child of the entire sample. As such, reference to this interviewee will consider her the Young Mother. Although narrow in terms of conveying an entire personality, this designation conveys an appropriately descriptive namesake here as the primary influence

on her temporal experience. The Young Mother not only ranked as highest in frequency of using terms of temporal ownership, but also in the number of variant phrases offered. From my time, to me time, time for myself, time for you, and time for yourself, the theme of ownership over time was heavily prominent for the Young Mother.

Early on in the interview she asserts a connection between the necessity of ‘time for yourself’ and the role of parent. She explains: “Cause, I mean, with a child, you are gonna have to have *time for yourself*. Even if it’s in the bathroom or while you’re takin a shower. You just need to get away from everything.” It is a sentiment reiterated throughout the interview. She particularly emphasizes its value to her as a relief from and preventative measure against moments of acute stress. She elaborates: “You just need *time for you*, cause if you don’t have any time, you will like, lose everything in your – just, have a breakdown. So, you have to have that *time for yourself*. Even if it’s just, like I said, like even if it’s in the bathroom, your room, and you just need to shut the door, lie on the floor, just close your eyes, just anything. You need that *time for yourself*.”

As conveyed in these quotes, her role as a mother is central to her emphasis on temporal ownership. She describes “time for yourself” as a coping mechanism of sorts, for herself specifically, and for parents generally -- as way to separate oneself, to “get away,” or create some sense of boundary, if even this just means shutting a door or closing one’s eyes. Her “even if it’s just” clause emphasizes the amplified value of this state for her as a parent due to its limited availability. This, of course, is not surprising. Even those researchers who dispute the assertion that we have on the whole become busier recognize the reality of time-poverty for particular groups, of which parents of young children ranks at the top (Robinson & Godbey, 1997).

In addition to the more generalized “time for yourself,” she also refers to “my time” and “me-time” through the interview as well. She returns to two primary experiences that she calls upon as examples. In the first scenario she describes the activity of getting a manicure and/or pedicure. She describes its value in its ability to help her relax and “get away.” She tries to make time for the occasion

on a monthly basis. In talking about her enjoyment of this personal time, while technically not alone, she emphasizes a separation from the people in her life in relaying: “When I’m doing *my me-time*, when I go and get my nails and my toes done, that’s the only time I won’t miss everybody.” In her second main example, she describes “my time” as the experience of being at home by herself, describing the ability of “bein able to just lie on the couch, and just not think about anything. Just, ya know, just relax,” characterizing the experience as one where “nobody is callin my name, nobody’s tellin me to run errands, I don’t have to watch anybody. It’s just, *my time*. To me.” She pinpoints the weekend as a span of time most likely to allow for these activities, as it is a weekly scheduled span in which her daughter spends time away from her and is in the care of her father.

Like “time for yourself,” these examples of “my time” also share in the sense of getting away, or of escape from the responsibilities of everyday life. Relaxation and stress-relief were common to her descriptions of these experiences. Yet, what seemed a dominant characterization across her examples was a sense of physical separation – whether from the boundaries of the bathroom walls or the aesthetician’s chair, she highlights each as a separation from others in her life (“I won’t miss everybody”). As her concept of “time for yourself” represents a respite from parenting, her examples of “my time” also convey a sense of being away from others, or being alone, affirming the value of solitude attached to her concept of temporal ownership. That separation is most directly clarified in the description of relaxing at home as a time where she neither has to answer to or watch anybody. As this example emphasizes, her most poignant descriptions of separation imply separation from her role as a mom.

Thus, like the professor, the concept of “my-time” for this young mother also seems rooted in the boundaries of availability as per a particular role. Although the roles of professor and mother are distinctly different from one another, their shared sense of pressure for extended availability (even immediacy) is what seems to exacerbate the value of “my time” for these participants. In other words, that appreciation for a personal sense of ownership over time seems heightened in the context for which discretion over time seems the exception to the rule. An additional example, in the case of the graduate

student, follows in conclusion to this topic on categories of ownership. Although his emphasis on “my time” was much less than the other two, he provides the runner up example, additionally relevant in its similarities and thus in suggesting potential themes of relevance.

The Grad Student, etc.

One last example of emphasis on temporal ownership comes from the Graduate Student. While he is aptly named as the only (and unintended) Graduate Student in the study, this pseudonym is also a suitably summative descriptor of his temporal context and orientation. As a graduate student, his orientation to the role of student differs from the other students in the study. Unlike most of the undergraduate students, he finds himself concerned with this role for a majority of his time. He even discerns of his own experience that, unlike his undergraduate experience which involved more “going out” and “staying out” late, his experience as a student now is one in which he is much more involved with his academic work. Furthermore, with the parameters of his assistantship including teaching and maintaining his own courseloads, his role as student differs from the others in that he additionally performs in the role of teacher. Finding himself in the role of graduate student more often than not, he reports feeling it sometimes difficult to separate himself from his work as student and teacher, and relays the personal importance of maintaining a delicate balance, which he describes at that between working and taking breaks.

His relation of this balance to a sense of temporal ownership comes up in his talking about his difficulties with falling to sleep, a reoccurring topic for him throughout the interview. He highlights the distinction of Friday nights as the one night he does find himself more likely to have a peaceful and full night’s sleep. He first relays: “I have noticed that Friday nights I sleep the best. Friday nights I can really just detach completely. Come Saturday, Saturday afternoon, it’s already starting work for me again. And, um, I’m right back into it.” In elaborating upon the distinction, he characterizes the experience of nights like Friday nights as dependent upon the lack/lessening of a sense of immediacy: “I know that the next

day, at least, I don't have to think about anything . . . it's just knowing that, in my direct future, whatever day that is, that I, that I have a break. Yeah. I don't have anybody's expectation of how I should spend that time. Nobody can judge me, I just have *my free time*." He emphasizes his free time (through the concept of a 'break') as that under his complete control, without others' expectations or judgments.

This separation of time as based on the perceived presence and pressure of others' demands or expectations resonates with the implications of temporal ownership as implied by the Young Professor and the Young Mother. Where the graduate student defines a sense of *my free time* as one free of anyone else's judgment or expectation, the young mother similarly names and describes the scenario where no one is calling her name or requiring her attention, just as the young professor clarifies *my time* as that which cuts off her availability to her students. As the top three emphasize of temporal ownership, the Young Professor, the Young Mother, and the Graduate Student convey their relationship to this personally predominating theme in revealingly similar terms. They each characterize their concept of owned time through particular vernacular (my time, me time, time for me, my free time), describing an experience as specifically outside the expectations and demands of others. The emphasized value of these experiences is also shared by this group in each presenting sense of ownership as a relatively rare experience in contrast with more predominant feelings of pressure to answer to others or meet others expectations/demands, whether professor, mother, or student.

Thus, the division made between being outside or inside of these roles respectively correlates with the distinction between sense of temporal ownership and the implication of a lack thereof. Each case highlights unique aspects and contexts – like the role of technology's instantaneity for the professor, the immediacy of parenthood for the young mother, and the enmeshment of the graduate student with his work. Yet, all of these contexts share in their presentation as a site of struggle in finding/having/making room for the experience of having one's own time. This shared sentiment also shares in resultantly endowing this experience with a heightened value, thus presenting the rationale

behind this trio of participants as those expressing the greatest emphasis on the idea of temporal ownership.

Categories of Content

In moving on in the discussion of how people linguistically categorize time, categories of content is a theme nearly as present as categories of ownership. Although these two themes find overlap, their distinction warrants separate considerations. As its label implies, the notion of categories of content refers to a temporal partition based upon an emphasis on type and/or characterization of content. For example, references to type of content may imply particular activities or behaviors: references to *nap time* or *play time* respectively indicate activities associated with sleep or play. Generally, where type categorizes content by activity, characterization categorizes content by description. However these types are not mutually exclusive or necessarily static. For example, while *quiet time* emphasizes the context (or expectation) of silence rather than a particular activity, a term such as *play time* could indicate either description or activity, dependent upon whether play is used as an adjective or a noun.

One of the most culturally popular expressions of a temporal division based on content is the notion of leisure time. It holds significance for a consideration of temporal language, particularly due its popularity, but also lends insight in exemplifying the difficulty of operationalizing temporal concepts. Its definition alone as “freedom from work or duties” bears a great range of various significance/meaning/definition. Like the earlier, similarly posed inquiry about the phrase quality time, leisure time also bears great implication as a type of cultural idiom, a concept and temporal division far from universal, but reflective of a particular type of society, with particular values, and particular structures of temporal meaning.

Three participants stand out in their usage of categories of content, and thus, also in the significance of these expressions to their temporal experience. The first of these three, the Forever

Explorer, is introduced here on the basis of his representing the highest frequency and greatest variety in the use of such expressions. Although leisure time is actually one of the expressions he uses, it is one of several. Additional resonance shines in two other interviews, one with another male professor, the Department Head, and one with a female professor, the Retired Teacher. For these two participants, each emphasizes a particular expression relevant to the idea of temporal categories of content, reflecting highly personalized, perhaps even temporally caricaturizing categories (through the terms *peaceful time* and *rest time*, respectively).

The Forever Explorer

In introducing the first participant in relevance to the categories of content it seems appropriate to initially provide a framework of his orientation through explaining his chosen moniker. An effort of trial and error, after trying on a few options the designation at Forever Explorer stuck. The selection was settled in its ability to best capture a poignant scene from his childhood, one with suggestions of roots for his temporal orientation, even identity. He paints the scene with his childhood self at the edge of the woods, literally just beyond his backyard, feeling beckoned by a sense of wonderment and magnetism without reservation or heed. He describes himself as a child literally wanting to get lost in the woods (a trait, he says, which had not been similarly appreciated by his parents!).

In his minds' eye, he says he retains that view of himself as that child wanting to let go in exploration. The value he assigns to this experience encompasses a child-like sense of temporal freeze or suspension - a context for which no sense of time exists beyond that present moment. A running theme, he frequently expresses the value of a particularly explorative sense towards time, one also indicating a sense of present-ness or being in the moment.

Turning to the temporal vocabulary of the Forever Explorer, his main terminology consists of references to family time, leisure time, and renewal/imaginative/play time – all terms fitting to the concept of temporal categories of content. In beginning with consideration for his conception of family

time, it seems necessary to first mention his family context, particularly as one unique in this sample. He is not distinct in being in a relationship, as a status shared with all seven professors and two (of eight) students.⁵⁵ He represents one of three married professors (himself, another male, and one female) and one of four in a cohabitating relationship (those married plus an additional male professor with a live-in partner).⁵⁶ He is one of three professors with children, and seemingly randomly, the same three professors introduced in this section on categories of content. However, a significant exception to the rule (especially in terms of temporal experience), he is the only professor with children 18 years of age and younger and the only with children still residing in the same household; the children of the other two professors are grown and have been on their own for some time already.⁵⁷ Thus, as the participant sharing his roof with the greatest number of family members, it is not entirely surprising that he would be the one to refer to the notion of family time.

In responding to my question of what the term “family time” means to him, he replies that he would apply the term ‘family time’ to a variety of activities involving his family (his wife and/or sons), including things like hiking, walking/playing with their dogs, going to a concert or the theater, as well as “simple stuff” like seeing a movie, or “just talking.” In regards to spending time with his family, he stresses it including a mix of spontaneous and planned activities. Planned things range from prolonged hiking trips or backpacking excursions, to scheduled, reoccurring activities like fencing practice with his sons. Yet, as his namesake seeks to capture, it is the value of the spontaneous that he emphasizes most, both generally and in relation to that experience which he designates as family time. Further detailing the significance of family time, he relays:

We don’t schedule it [family time] so much. Except if we’re going away on the weekend or something like that. We just, try to do it. I mean, we like to have freedom to be- We all pretty much like to be spontaneous about, some of our time, at least. School makes people over-

⁵⁵ Note of interest: three of the professors are involved in long-distance relationships.

⁵⁶ None of the students are married or living with their partner (although one student reports spending a great deal of time at her boyfriend’s, she still technically lives with her parents).

⁵⁷ Only one of the students, the Young Mother, had children, she represents the other parent in the study with children under 18 years of age and still residing with parents

structured and work makes people over-structured. And then, gotta have time where you just—that's free, ya know, it's not like written down .

This notion of spontaneity is one at the heart of the Forever Explorer's temporal experience. A theme of emphasis throughout his interview, it is thus not surprising to find his temporal vocabulary wrapped around the concept as well. In addition to its value as a characterization of family time, it is the same appreciation of structurelessness which finds spontaneity equally defining his expressed value for leisure time, renewal time, and imagination time (or time for play). He stresses these concepts as values he holds both on an individual and societal level.

In referring to the summer and winter breaks along the academic calendar, he aligns leisure time with a greater sense of balance in observing, "I get more extended periods of time in those spaces. I also get leisure time. I think a lot of people don't. I honestly think too many people lead unbalanced lives in this world, and they think they have to work, *all the time* . . . it just kills people" [italics convey emphasis in speech]. Reflecting upon the reality of over-work and busiedness, as he has observed in others, he casts the significance of leisure time as a serious matter. Perhaps as witness to the busied tendencies of his co-workers, he may have had his own versions of the Young Professor in mind in conjuring the notion of working oneself to death.

At one point he details the experience of family vacations as a quintessential experience of spontaneity. It is an experience he labels as renewal time and refreshment time, expressions which lend to the related conceptualization of imagination time as a modernly relevant social issue, and one standing in critique of the educational system of which he is a part. In his words:

We go to this lake up in northwestern Montana, and it's like, the most beautiful place on earth, and we just go and . . . *Everything* is spontaneous . . . It's far north and it's high summer, so, the days last til 11 p.m. It's warm and sunny and beautiful and there's mountains all around you. And you can go hiking, swimming, fishing, jet-skiing, sitting, cloud-watching. Running, playing, kayaking . you can do whatever you want. It's just, play-play-play, play-play. And then you go to bed at night after dark, which is like, 11:30 at night. And you wake up the next morning and you do it all again. And there's no agenda . . .

That's renewal time. And refreshment time, and recharging batteries time. And working-out problems that you've been holding onto time . . . All that stuff, ya know. Yeah . . . Spiritual. And calm, and peaceful, and all that stuff. Playful. Imagination time, which is really nice . . . *That's* one of the things I think I worry about in our culture. With so much structured stuff, so much stuff distracting people, like television. That there seems to be a loss of energy and time devoted to imagination and play. That seems to pull back- It seems to be . . . shrinking . . . They cut budgets in schools, they cut art . . . my feeling is, the first thing they should teach.

From family time, to leisure time, renewal time, and imagination time, his temporal values represent spontaneity, play, and creativity, not just personally but as matters relevant to the sense of a balanced life, and even balanced world. One seemingly best captured in that picture of a boy seeking to lose time, and himself, in an ever-expansive woods.

The Forever Explorer, however, is just first of three participants finding an appropriate introduction within this topic. Also professors, the remaining two introductions are to the Department Head and the Retired Professor. As intended to indicate by their names, the temporal sense of these remaining two seems bound to their stated roles. Unlike the Forever Explorer's example of multiple content based categories, their stories are warranted here in the offering by each of one specific, but reoccurring expression. These personally meaningful phrases provide a unique lens into appreciating these additional narratives of time.

The Department Head

The Department Head is so called as it is this role which has come to shape his daily routines and weekly schedules. While he does maintain boundaries in separation from it (usually in the evenings), this role exerts great influence in defining the parameters of his personal schedules and routines; this is nearly true to a daily extent, with an average week finding him 'at the office' for a part of the day, every day, Monday through Sunday. This makes it all the more interesting that the temporal expression he emphasizes most stands in a type of antithetical stance to the busied experience of his namesake role. "Peaceful time" is the expression which takes this stance, referring to a standard part of his daily routine.

It is an experience he associates with the morning hours, but a concept representing greater significance than merely a parameter of schedule.

He first brings up the phrase “peaceful time” in reflecting upon the observation of the opposing temporal patterns/routines between himself and his partner, with whom he lives. Where he is a person who likes to wake up early in the morning, his partner is someone who likes to stay up to the early morning hours and wake in the afternoon. Although he remarks that the difference may cause occasional frustration, such as in the scenario of a long car trip and differing orientations when it comes to travel itinerary, he generally frames these opposing temporal schemas as complementary. It is in fact this opposition which encourages the possibility of his having the experience he refers to as peaceful time. He reports, “It works out fine because, um, she never has been someone who likes to get up early, and so, I do. But, I also really enjoy being alone in the morning, in the sense that it’s sort of a *peaceful time* for me, you know. And, so I can get up, and do whatever, you know, I do in the morning, and then later she does her thing.”

In responding to the request for elaboration about the meaning of this phrase, he begins with sharing this as an historical pattern: “Ever since I can remember, as a kid. I’ve always been an early riser. And for me, it was sort of like, a time when, you know, I could just do what I wanted to do. And just not have to deal with other people, sort of thing.” The theme of solitude is thus an important characteristic, defining this experience for him both as a child and as an adult. From this angle, the category of peaceful time holds resemblance to the issue of sense of ownership, in the overlaps within the characterization of solitude or being alone.

As for content, while he emphasizes that this experience does not designate anything spectacular or even out of the ordinary, stressing that it often encompasses everyday things, he does nonetheless provide a list of specific activities he associates with this experience. When asked about content, he casts it as “Really, mundane stuff, you know. I mean, emptying the dishwasher, making coffee. Um, sometimes, I’ll do my walk in the morning. Sometimes, just sit on the deck and, drink coffee, and watch the birds and

the squirrels, sometimes . . . And then, that sort of, then leads into doing reading, if I'm going to be doing any reading." Despite a sense of his playing down this experience in referring to its contents as mundane, a pause of consideration suggests a greater kind of importance, showing both in his maintenance and description of this experience. First is his effort to maintain it as an experience continued from "ever since I can remember." While the maintenance of this pattern could easily be argued the result of his merely, naturally following a sort of personal 'clock' or circadian rhythm, it could just as easily be additionally and/or overlappingly due to a sense of personal choice or preference. More than a possibility, this latter scenario seems likely as suggested in his describing the temporal parameters it creates as peaceful, indicating by this term, a certain value.

The distinction of an experience as peaceful, as one conveying a harmonious, tranquil, and/or serene quality, suggests a particular type, even depth, of value. This experience is directly correlated with, even defined by solitude, and further shares some overlap with experiences outdoors (sitting on his deck and walking). While this span may include things he considers mundane, it excludes things that would reject the peaceful label (perhaps things like listening to loud music, turning on the television, etc.). If even it were that he wakes up relatively early more by chance (or context) than by choice, it is still by choice that he maintains this period's ability to fit his conception of peaceful by selecting activities which maintain accord with this label.

Although not delivered in the same way, this peaceful time seems kin to the young mother's 'my time' – her brief moments in the bathroom in which she can take a momentary break from the immediate pressings of parenthood. Both 'my time' and 'peaceful time' are not only worthy of naming, and thus separating/distinguishing from other experiences, but are characterized by a certain value through the particular labels used. This value is expressed most blatantly as a type of respite, a span of temporary rest or distance from the rest of the day's responsibilities and duties; a span free of roles or expectations, and one often characterized by solitude. Yet further, while possibly 'only five minutes' or filled with merely

‘mundane things,’ these experiences nonetheless find added value as a type of anchor – value in reliability and consistency rather than magnitude in delivery.

The Retired Teacher

The last case of relevance for this topic is that of the Retired Teacher (so named due to her identity as teacher with an extensive work history in this role beyond the university setting). This case finds distinction from the outset as the oldest (at 67 years old), and only retired participant in the study.⁵⁸ In having had retired within the year previous to the interview, her description as the Retired Professor indicates a recent evolution of her temporal orientation, and one quite significant, given her strong ties to this role. Despite the name nicely synopsisizing the context of her orientation, it is merely part of a much greater adjustment. Intriguingly, this deeper shift is well captured through the temporal expression of relevance to this present discussion.

For the Retired Teacher, it is the phrase “rest time” or concept of “time for rest” that played a reoccurring theme. It is one which not only holds implication for the relevance of her temporal experience, but additionally as a microcosm of her greater life situation. For the Retired Teacher, the concept of rest time is pivotal in its significance as a representative crux of the cancer diagnosis that she had received a year prior to the interview.

Reporting it as the moment which changed everything in an instant, she talks throughout the interview through the context of this diagnosis. She both describes and exhibits its significance. This pivotal point played an important role in the interview, frequently dividing her responses into two forms: pre-diagnosis and post-diagnosis. Her notion of ‘rest time’ provides a significant representation of this shift. As a previously non-existent or contentious concept at best, the swift emergence of its demanded

⁵⁸ As was the case for the graduate student, she was contacted on the basis of her name being listed on a roster of teachers for the current semester; the intended goal was to interview active, not retired professors, but the interview was nonetheless conducted and included.

centrality ultimately paved the way for its eventual celebration, suggesting the temporally subjective roots of this profound journey of adaptation.

In talking about her experience as a professor, before her diagnosis, she reports that she, “Never, ever, ever had a rest time. Never. No. That was a one-way street.” Before the diagnosis, she relays her strong identification with her role as teacher keeping her hours and days full. She recalls structuring her daily and weekly routines around the primacy of related responsibilities – teaching, preparing for class, reading, meeting with students, grading, etc. – and the desire to give each her all. The personal significance of her work and to her specific role as teacher shows in her temporally relevant philosophies stating “a teacher’s work is never done,” and that “there will always be more to do,” without even a tinge of resentment for the according busyness which predominated the majority of her adult life. She relayed confidence in the worth of her efforts within the possibility of helping or engaging even one student.

Thus, the mandate that she stop working and instead structure her days around the concept of rest was a great challenge of adjustment. It created two overlapping facets: first in having to give up the teaching role which had been central to her life, and secondly in the necessary adaptation to making self-care and rest a priority. For example, she recalled struggling with reaching the point of “giving myself permission” to take a nap, sharing: “I had to go through the process of getting past the point, when I’d never, *never* done this before. I never took naps. *Ever. Ever.* (laughs). So, this was very different for me.”

She emphasizes throughout the interview that the very real reality of her ensuing physical limitations (fatigue/exhaustion/“depleted energy”) largely negated her choice/control in the adjustment: Psychological objections held no power over bodily demands. She talks about the experience as learning and adapting to new ways of structuring time. She reflects upon the change after her diagnosis in relaying:

I was recently saying, as far as what I did learn about, when you’re dealing with a health issue like that, is that *I did learn to structure that time*. And I never did before. In my whole life. And I found out that that was absolutely essential. Ya know, when they started telling me about energy being gone. Until I experienced it, I didn’t really understand. But, so, again . I had to, make myself structure, and say, ‘Tsk. Now-now. Ya know. Go listen to music or something for two hours.

While this rest time seemed to initially mean for her literal, physical rest, it grew alongside her adjustment and reconfiguration of a new approach to life, on a daily basis and beyond. Its parameters grew to include *restful* activities like watching movies with her husband, listening to music, and reading mystery novels – activities rarely included in her life as a professor.⁵⁹ She reported having gotten back into playing the piano – an intensely enjoyed hobby from childhood that had taken a hiatus of over 50 years. Time for rest grew to become a mental suggestion, rather than a physical demand.

Despite that making time for rest was at first a daily, even hourly struggle, her ability to find peace with this adjustment evolved into a form of celebration. She reported finding herself prioritizing the company of loved ones, frequently now making the effort to get together for lunch or coffee with family and friends. She finds herself thoroughly enjoying her renewed connection with music and books, and even finds enjoyment in things like cooking and eating which seemed merely matters of necessity before. (During our interview she excitedly shared her plans for that evening's dinner to try cooking shrimp for the first time.)

Perhaps the most blatant sign of a transition is in her response when people ask her about her thoughts on returning to teaching. She shares reporting that she has now found peace through the idea of moving onto a new stage in her life and has accordingly taken the opportunity for an earlier than planned retirement. The role of teacher, which was once so central to her, and had shaped the busied lifestyle she found difficult to give up, had become one she may reminisce about, but whose value she has contextualized within a spectrum of opportunities, or life stages.

Thus, this perhaps seemingly ordinary shift in orientation to the concept of rest time signals much greater significance than a physical adjustment alone. The imposed restructuring of her time ultimately reformulated her concept of rest. No longer is rest time a physical mandate, a concept attached to a sense of struggle in its unfair ability to both create and settle a conflict between mind and body in which the former doesn't get a say. Making time for rest has grown to mean making time for

⁵⁹ Although some exceptions came along during summer time vacations.

enjoyment -of movies, music, and other peoples' company, just as much as it does sleeping and napping and retreating. Her changing orientation to rest time represents not just a change in the content and experience of her time and days, but reflects an even deeper evolution in self-identity and orientation to, perhaps even philosophy of life.

Dichotomous Categories

This final section concerning the use of temporally categorized expressions considers the theme of dichotomous categories. This theme is pointedly expressed by particular interviewees, whose introductions will shortly focus the bulk of this section. Yet, first is the brief consideration of the all-encompassing application of dichotomy to all the temporally-based introductions thus far. Generally speaking, the process of categorization itself necessarily creates a boundary implying two antithetical categories, at least. This implication of dichotomy applies to the naming/framing of any thing in that this linguistic function not only clarifies one thing, but additionally implies something 'other' against which the named can be distinguished (for a further consideration of language as distinction, see Zerubavel, 1991).

To consider previous examples, the designation of time ownership, through the labeling of a "my time" or "time for me" implies not only these concepts but others as well, at least in the form of the antithetical of time *not* for me or time that is *not* free. Without the existence of the latter experiences, no need would exist to clarify the former. To recall an example from the literature review's consideration of the term quality time – While terms like 'woman doctor' or 'woman engineer' may have once distinguished an exception to the rule, they also implied a rule to deviate from, suggesting a type of dichotomy between rule and exception. Thus, behind the expression of a phrase like *my time* is the indirect expression of its antithetical counterpart as time which could be considered someone else's, or rather, that which feels to be under another's control/discretion. Similarly, those categories of content also designate their description, as well as its antithesis. (The Department Head's labeling of peaceful time, for example, also suggests the existence of a time which is not that.)

To explore the notion of dichotomous categories further, i would like to switch gears in turning to the examples where the interviewees directly presented dichotomous notions of time.

The Poetic Agent

This divide was a theme strongest in the first interview with a male professor. He frequently referred to and spoke about a distinction between experiences of sacred time and profane time, presenting this dichotomy as a way to compartmentalize and also describe his temporal experiences. This professor is called the Poetic Agent given his strong emphasis on the correlation between time and free will (considered further in a following section on agency) and his emphasis on creative writing, and poetry in particular, as an epitome of sacred time. Although borrowing the terms from historian Mircea Eliade, he conveys the significance of the sacred vs. profane divide for his own experience of time. In offering a direct comparison, he draws on the original religious scope of the terms:

I've actually, on more than one occasion, made a conscious decision to say, okay, on the designated most sacred times of the Jewish calendar . . . deliberately chosen to spend that time, alone in the woods. as opposed to being, ya know, in a religious group . . . I don't think you can totally separate space, time. It's a space, time continuum (*laughs*). Uh, because, ya know, this idea, of, certain space, sacralizing time, I think makes a lot of sense. For me, one of the most profane places I could ever imagine being, is in a, um, a religious service. Because everything is managed for appearances. And, uh, there's this constant kinda maneuvering, and relationship to how you look to the other people in there. And, I, I fundamentally believe that, worship doesn't mean anything, in the company of others.

In relying on this originally religious scope, he characterizes profane time by superficiality and sacred time with solitude. His connection between space and time finds the superficiality of the profane epitomized in the setting of an organized religious service, and the sacred best captured in a secluded cabin in the woods. Talking about his experience of sacred time draws the description outside of the strict religious setting, although arguably not entirely separate from an experience of spirituality. In response to the request for elaboration on his concept of sacred time, he offers two examples as

quintessential experiences: the experience of being in nature, specifically the woods, and the experience of creative writing. In talking about the former as an experience of sacred time, he further describes:

It's selfless time, uh, which is odd because you feel, most at home in yourself. But, it's selfless time, in the sense that, it is not a, um, socially stipulated role . . . I return to this idea of unconditional acceptance. And, I think, just, a kinda feeling, that you are being enveloped in something that is not constraining or strangling. I mean, there's like, envelopment in the sense of being in the midst of things as they always are supposed to be, without you having to exert, uh, some sort of effort, to, well, quite frankly, to be listened to in that. And, you're listened to without actually, explicitly having to say anything. You're listened to by virtue of the fact that you are simply there. Um, and it's very, very hard to see where that is a point that can be achieved in that profane environment.

He adds here another layer to the concept of sacred time in offering as its parallel the additional notion of selfless time. In this elaboration he expands the notion of sacred/selfless time as characterized in, not only the contexts of solitude and nature, but the experiential sense of freedom ("feeling that you are enveloped in something that is not constraining or strangling") and even connection ("the sense of being the midst of things"). Thus it seems that the dichotomy between profane and sacred also represents one between superficiality and selflessness, or preoccupation with presentation versus its absence.

In his consideration of creative writing as a type of sacred time, he further emphasizes actually feeling a difference in the experience of time, in making the distinction from the experience of writing academically:

I mean, I feel differently. And this is one of the reasons why, like creative writing and academic writing, not just stylistically have a lot of tension between them. But you, *you experience the time differently*. I mean I always have, the academic writing, that task-oriented sense and all that. And the creative writing, I don't know what's going to happen. Uh, I know, that there is this something, that needs to be expressed; I'm not exactly sure how that's going to come out. And, I don't feel that I'm totally in control of that. And that's the interesting part of the creative writing.

In this description of creative writing as a form of sacred time, notions of control (implications of ownership) play out on several levels. He first distinguishes creative writing from academic writing in the sense of the former having no set direction.

The comparison seems implied as against the more restrictive writing of the academic world as a context of less freedom and personal control over form and direction. Yet, loss of control is also how he characterizes the creative experience of writing. However, in this latter description, loss of control is akin to a sense of structurelessness as freedom (an equation also made by the Forever Explorer), and not the restriction he describes of academic writing. Thus, onto the layered division – between sacred and profane, and selfless and superficial – an additional parallel is drawn between the division of freedom and restriction, providing another layer to his dichotomous division of time.

The Restless Creator

A similar categorization was also offered early on in the first interview with a female professor. The Restless Creator, she describes herself as perpetually restless and as a body usually in motion, reporting that even when teaching, her attempts to sit still do not last very long. She begins the interview with a poignant story about her temporal restlessness:

When I read your e-mail about the study, I had to laugh. Because, when I was first in graduate school, even at that point in my life when I was already well into my, probably into my 30s – I used to call my dad, hysterical. And he would say, 'Okay, honey. Everything that you have told me that you have to do,' he said, 'that adds up to about 36 hours in a day. And there are only 24. And so you have to figure out what you're gonna do.' So I would historic- I would make that phone call for years. And then, I would finally go, 'Hi dad. Not enough hours in the day. How are you?' But I would actually-- I didn't catch on to that. That that was the problem, for a long time. That, it's not a question of there's not enough time; I have too many things to do.

Although this vignette sets the stage for a more directly made dichotomy, it also foreshadows it. This quote details the restlessness of her temporal orientation, to stand in opposition to her temporal experience of creativity. The latter component of her name comes from her expression of unparalleled enjoyment for a range of creative endeavors, including dancing/choreography and various art projects, such as making cards for family and friends. She highlights this last activity as providing the contrasting, and rare experience of her finding herself able to sit still, despite her usual restlessness:

This is the thing that is so funny. I don't, really, sit still. And I gotta lotta aches and pains. I'm old and I've been dancing for a long time and I have arthritis and all this. But IIII cannn siiiii fooor eeevvver *[to indicate slowed, deliberately drawn out speech]*. I might, stretch and move and shift, but I will, I will pick out the sequins and the sparkles and I'll just stay there forever. Most of the time I will multi-task, when I'm doing other things. But there are a couple of things that it's just like, it completely absorbs me, and time goes *[makes soft noise]*, ya know, passes, and I have no idea. Yeah. It's one of those.

Thus, her name itself captures a temporal antithesis of sorts, in that it describes both her physical and mental restlessness, but also the absorption in her creative moments which succeeds in canceling out the former. Yet, the relevance of her interview to the concept of dichotomous categories comes from a parallel, but directly offered pair of oppositional terms: auto-pilot versus mindful. While not quite as frazzled as the Young Professor, her restlessness is a characterization of her temporal experience as primarily busied, and she uses this dichotomy to further articulate her temporal experience in its contrast inside and outside that rule:

Well, since I've been taking yoga, it really encourages a mindfulness, rather than auto-pilot . . . I'm trying to be more aware of when I am on auto-pilot. When I am just right- going through time, just, going through it; just, get through and just do the activities. And that's not always bad, but, sometimes, I do want to savor a little bit more. And, also, think, ya know, it may be, it could be done a different way. What would that look like, what would that feel like?

When asked for elaboration on this division of experience between that described as mindful and that described as auto-pilot, she shares one example of the struggle in trying to exercise the former over the latter:

So, even, even with teaching, my initial impulse, coming back from this Spring Break, today, was just like Oh My God, Oh My God, on-your-mark-get-set, we have to go so fast, we have so many things to do. And, I thought, No, I'm the one in charge here. We can just- This is what we need to do. How do we want to handle it? . . . And, sorta just, changed my relationship to that. And say, we all feel like there's not enough time. But that doesn't help us get things done necessarily. So, I kinda said, just, how can we do this? Let's look ahead, let's look back, ya know. And, cause I think in the past, I sort of did this, 'Race to the finish line(!)' And, I thought, Well, just stay focused on the finish line, but we don't have to race.

Thus, in the comparison between auto-pilot and mindfulness, she emphasizes the automated feel of the former in describing it as just “going through time” and implying it behind the pressure “to go so fast” and “race to the finish line.” As the antithesis, she offers mindfulness as an experience she has grown in appreciation for through the practice of yoga. She reports it as providing her greater incentive to be aware of how much of her experience is spent on auto-pilot, assumedly with the goal of limiting it towards that desire to “savor a little bit more.” Aligning mindfulness with awareness and the ability to savor (the moment), suggests a sense of presentness and engagement as well. As depicted in the scenario of her card-making, this experience of engagement can be characterized both by an amplified sense of the present and a lack of awareness for the passage of time. A superficially seeming contradiction, the experience extends such a far reach into the present moment that it can lose touch with its greater context (i.e., the inability to see the forest from the trees).

The dichotomy between auto-pilot and mindful thus represents an experiential divide between automation and awareness, racing and presence, restlessness and creativity. The division is in ways similar to some of those previously made. The idea of being in an automatic or machine-like mode contrasts with the awareness, the human-ness even, of mindfulness. In its machinelike implication, the idea of an auto-mode also implies lack of personal control, similar to the notion of time feeling as though under someone else’s ownership/discretion. Relatedly, like the division between the sacred and the profane, that between auto-pilot and mindfulness also separates on the basis of superficiality versus engagement. Mindfulness as a sense of awareness or presence shares with the notion of sacred time as an experience of connection, and also with peaceful time through a sense of tranquility. All seem to share in a sense of engagement in the moment, tranquility, even timelessness. While the terms mindfulness, auto-mode, and auto-pilot differ from previous examples in that they do not directly refer to time, their temporal relevance is no less significant.

The Contradictive Learner, etc.

The second female student interviewed, 21 years old and in her senior year, offered several interrelated versions of temporal dichotomies. The best sum of her temporal experience seems bound to a contradiction in which her perceived pressure to not waste time exists alongside the conviction that she mostly does just that. Early in the interview, in responding to questions about her daily and weekly schedule and routines, she expresses an initial, related distinction between “time spent doing important things” versus “time spent doing miscellaneous things.” In an example, she provides schoolwork as an important task and surfing the internet as miscellaneous. However, while she makes the distinction of miscellaneous tasks from the value of importance, she reports a sense of frustration in often finding herself, despite her intentions, spending more of her time with the former.

Another example articulates this discrepancy further. She later in the interview refers to the concept of “brain exercise” as a concept additionally in opposition to the category of “miscellaneous tasks.” By this she expresses the experience of almost feeling her brain contort in effort towards learning a new concept. She reports this as an experience only with particularly challenging or abstract material and offers trying to grasp some concepts from her boyfriend’s physics’ class as example. As another, specific instance of the brain exercise experience, she reports that she finds herself in this same type of mode while reading or writing sometimes at a campus coffeeshop. She describes the experience as one in which she can become so engaged in the material that she loses awareness of time:

That happens whenever I actually do get started on stuff . It’s kinda strange that I can’t just pull myself through and just get started. Because, once I start reading something, I get really into it. Like, I really like all the things that I learn. Like, I love going to school. And, so, I don’t know. When I’m at the coffeeshop and I’m sitting down with my book, and I start reading, I’m like, ‘oh my goodness, what- where did those two hours go? I wish I could sit here all day.’

This example adds to the picture of the contradiction within her temporal experience. For, despite her expressed reverence for learning and the exercising of that opportunity through reading and writing for school assignments, she nonetheless reports usually procrastinating, explaining “I can’t just

pull myself though and just get started.” In putting off starting assignments nearly until they are due, she leaves herself little time with procrastinated assignments, necessarily limiting her ability to deeply engage with the material. Thus, she limits the opportunity for that very experience she says she loves and “could sit here all day” doing.

So, when she does find herself engaged in these procrastinated assignments, she finds herself with regret that she hopes (every time) will give her the motivation to start the next one earlier. Yet, this precautionary measure never seems to pan out. In her summation of ‘brain exercise,’ she further describes the personal frustration of this discrepancy:

I hate writing papers, cause I hate getting started. But, when I actually get into it, that’s like when I feel – Cause, I don’t know if this happens to you, but when, I’m like really getting into something, or getting, thinking really hard about things, like, I can feel my- it feels like my brain is exercising. Like, it’s being really, really active. And, so, that’s when I feel like it’s really rewarding, cause then it’s like, ‘ahhhh’ – there’s tension in my head while I’m doing these things, but it’s not like, bad tension. It’s like, you can feel like you’re really concentrating on something, and then when you’re done, it’s just like, wow, I just completed all this great stuff. And I wish I had done it earlier. Cause it, it is rewarding. And I just, I forget that these things are rewarding until after I’ve done them. And then I get mad that I didn’t do it earlier.

Delving further into the contradictory component of her experience, she presents the primary obstacle in just getting started. Working part-time at a laundromat owned by her parents, she finds stretches of down-time particularly opportunistic to start a school project, especially given her access to a computer and the internet. However, she reports that despite her intentions to begin conducting research or brainstorming ideas, that she usually finds herself distracted by checking e-mail or other online content (specifically mentioning facebook, tumblr, and a few blogs as sites she frequents). She says the same about the scenario of being at her boyfriend’s apartment, where she spends a majority of her time. Facing the scenario of him working on his homework and her feeling the pressure to do so as well, while she may feel she should follow suit, she often finds herself surfing the internet instead. Generally, in regards to her distraction by way of miscellaneous things, she blames an intense inability to stay focused. In the examples she provided, the internet seems to play a primary culprit of distraction.

A third division that she makes relates to the important/miscellaneous, brain exercise/miscellaneous dichotomies. She relays similar frustration between “time spent planning” and “time spent doing.” She conveys often only getting to the start of a project after feeling as though she has already sacrificed or wasted a lot of time on planning. She describes time spent planning as including scheduling or thinking about what needs to be done in addition to getting unnecessarily stuck in the details of preparation (like font and positioning titles and headers).

In sum, the dichotomous categorization in this case presents three layers: miscellaneous vs. important, miscellaneous (distractability) vs. brain-exercise, and planning vs. doing. The first two cases share the running theme of superficiality versus engagement as identified in the previous dichotomies of profane versus sacred and auto-pilot versus mindfulness. Where important tasks and brain-exercise share in a degree of depth or engagement, the miscellaneous is characterized by superficial/surface distractions. Her categorization of time between the divisions of miscellaneous versus important and planning versus doing provide her with the language to convey what seems a reoccurring staple of her temporally-based experience, especially when it comes to schoolwork and her role as student. These concepts express a feeling of conflict regarding time, even contradiction. In talking about the discrepancy between the way she would like to spend her time and the ways she actually does, she even questions herself aloud during the interview (and with a bit of an admonishing tone). Her emphasis on her ideal type of time as not only more efficient but more enjoyable, provides the riddled nature of her dichotomized temporality. The expressed culprits: inability to focus and tendency towards distraction, seem to find particular encouragement in the instantaneity of the internet.

It is additionally worth noting that when asked about her feelings on the grades she receives for these done-at-the-last-moment papers, she reports receiving mostly As and generally earning As in most of her classes. Yet, she says that despite getting an A on a last minute paper, that she will nonetheless feel disappointment for not having challenged herself. Thus, although she expresses personal

disappointment, her superficial success with her last minute papers possibly adds to her contradiction in decreasing the motivation/perceived need of further involvement.

Though not as directly delivered as a dichotomy, one other division warrants a brief mention, at least given its strong overlapping with the case of the Contradictive Learner. That division comes from the third female student interviewed. A sociology major in her senior year, she is thought of as the Sociologist in Waiting to symbolize the combination of her goal of wanting to be a professor ("It would be cool to get to do what they do") with her current means of supporting herself as a waitress. Like the previous student's "brain exercise," she utilizes the concept of "deep thought" in efforts to articulate the experience of intellectual exercise, or learning. She describes this experience as one in which, becoming internally absorbed, she loses touch with externalized passage of time. She offers an example of sitting in a movie theater before the movie starts, and becoming so absorbed with an unraveling inner dialogue and curiosity about why popcorn is associated with going to the movies, that she 'snaps out' of her trance-like state to realize the previews had begun without her notice.

In response to the request of elaborating upon "deep thought," she offers the contrasting experience of boredom. This engagement and the ability to 'lose track of time' while in deep thought is contrasted with the experience of boredom, one in which she may feel painfully aware of the clock's time. The idea of deep thought is additionally important for this student who sees this as not only a concept to relay an experience of intellect, but a marker of transition, as it symbolizes for her the ability to 'think in a different way,' an experience she says she owes to her coursework in sociology and that she feels has changed her as a person.

Interesting stories on their own, the pattern across dichotomous categorizations related to time is further intriguing. While each pair is a little different, their resemblance suggests similar roots. This core seems well articulated in the distinction between superficiality and engagement. Although each is meaningful in a personalized way, the concepts of sacred time, mindfulness, brain exercise, and deep thought are all defined in terms of a degree of engagement in connection with the present

moment/context. As seen, the representation of engagement can encompass both being present in and losing oneself in the moment.

As direct contrasts, profane time, auto-mode, miscellaneous things, and even sheer boredom all relate through degrees of superficiality and lack of engagement with the moment or task. Presence and engagement is pitted against absence and superficiality.

Implicating Time

This final subtopic of the vocabulary of time was the most unexpected. In deciding upon the need to include a section on the analysis of temporal vocabulary, the first theme on talking about time seemed a necessary, general lens on how people use the term, and the second theme of categorization suggested itself early on in the data collection and remained relevant throughout. This last theme, however, was more slowly, hesitantly emergent. I was first drawn to it out of personal curiosity to the reoccurrence of some particular, seemingly connected, vocabulary words. As the process of interviewing progressed, my curiosity steadied alongside the emergence of what i perceived as a significant pattern: Two inter-related sets of terms seemed to be showing up in nearly all the interviews. However, i felt hesitant in following through in an exploration of these terms, as, unlike most the other terms considered so far, these groups did not contain direct references to time. Yet, given my ultimate flexibility with this rule in the topic of dichotomous categories, the merit of this idea asserted its comparable worth.

My initial interest was piqued in hearing the term “perfectionist” used several times as a self-descriptor by both the first and second interviewees. This seemingly odd reoccurrence stuck out to me, prompting a mental note to observe if it might go any further. When the third interviewee described himself as “classic type A,” i thought it another interesting relation. Yet, when the fifth labeled herself both ADD and type A, the sixth emphasized her obsessive behavior and ADD-like inability to focus, the seventh referred to herself as an “anal,” “list-type person,” the eighth called herself ADD, and the ninth self-described as both perfectionist and obsessive-compulsive – these seemingly intertwined re-

occurrences suggested a significance greater than my personal curiosity alone. In some cases, participants directly linked these terms with matters of temporality, in some cases not. Yet, in stepping back to consider the full picture, the issue of time seems bound to each use of these terms. The frequency of their occurrence, showing up in two-thirds, or 10 of the 15 interviews, suggests promising potential too great to pass up.

From within this growing list of references shone two distinct, albeit related and frequently overlapping clusters. The first cluster centers around the concept of “ADD,” or attention deficit disorder, and ADD-like qualities. Nearly half of the participants (7 of 15) refer to either ADD specifically (4) or emphasize ADD-like qualities such as inability to focus or distractibility (2). Five of these mentions refer to self-descriptions, while two refer to descriptions applied to younger generations. At the core of the second cluster is the concept of perfectionism. The emergence of this pattern in the first two interviews set the tone for a wider list of similar terminology including references to having a “Type A,” “obsessive-compulsive,” or an “anal” personality. Over half of the sample (8 of 15) falls into this cluster with the usage of one or more of these references. A more detailed consideration of each cluster will follow.

ADD

Of the 15 interviewees, three (or one-fifth) referred to themselves using the specification “ADD.” When directly mentioned, references to ADD tended to appear alongside descriptions of “distractibility,” “inability to focus” or “short attention span(s).” The emphasis of these latter notions in two interviews, minus the ADD label, is construed relatedly relevant. Given these criteria, a total of five participants, or one-third of the group, expressed relevance to theme of ADD.

The participants who self-described as ADD are all female: two professors and one student. Given the first part of her name, the Restless Creator is not surprisingly one of the professors. Detailed earlier, her identifications with restlessness and inability to sit still fit with the characterizations of ADD.

While she offers the former descriptions, it is her partner who applies the latter, as she explains, “my partner, on bad days, will disparagingly call me ADD. But, I think, I definitely, I can bounce from thing to thing – it – and part of that is the creativity. I just think the way I connect things is not . . . very linear, and, and pretty spacious.” With an explanation exhibited in her speech almost as much as her words, she contrasts the label of ADD as put upon her, with her own, more positive reception of the related qualities.

The Young Professor, the newest and youngest of the professors, was the second to identify with the term. It comes up in a comparison of herself at the time of the interview and herself as an undergraduate. In comparing these two phases as contrasting experiences of time, she describes recognition of herself “as ADD” during graduate school as the turning point:

I think it hit me during my dissertation. That I was ADD. Because I realized, this is my life. It’s not gonna get any easier, this writing that I’m doing. In undergrad I could tell myself, it’s only four more years, it’s just for a few years. Master’s program, that’s just how it is in a master’s program. This didn’t hit me - No, this is my life. That, I can’t go back. Cause the ten years I spent in school, that was my life. It wasn’t just one more year of this or one more time with that. And, so now I think I’ve gotten much better at , these moments. I have to live my life. I want to be better, cause I want to take the time to actually experience the process. That makes my work better. It’s actually a transition that I’m pretty happy with . . . I can’t let my life be run by tenure.

She here alludes to a connection between a busied lifestyle and the context of academia, both as a student in graduate school and as a professor seeking tenure. It is worth noting that two of the three female professors use the term ADD in application to themselves.

The one student who refers to herself with the label ADD is the Sociologist in Waiting. Like the Contradictive Learner, despite her expressed enjoyment for learning new material, she also reports an inability to focus in trying to work on school assignments, especially at the start of a project. Yet, she offers the observation while in a sense normalizing, or applying a sense of universality to it, saying: “a lot of time I get like, ADD, unless I know I have to do it,” and quickly following up with, “I mean, I don’t know if I have it. I mean, everybody has it, to some extent. But, I guess I just always have something in my mind *(laughs)*.”

The two others for whom the theme is presented through related characteristics are also both students: one female and one male. As suggested, the ADD'd experience of the Sociologist in Waiting is quite similar to the description provided by the Contradictive Learner. Although she never uses the specific term ADD, a common theme for this latter participant is her inability to focus. In one instance she relates this quality to the dichotomy of miscellaneous vs. important, aligning it with her draw to the former: "I guess, I'm consumed by thinking of all of this stuff, as the time goes by, with me, doing like, miscellaneous things and not actually getting things done. And so I guess the important things, I, um, don't get done, or I don't feel like I can get them done on time, just cause, sometimes I just can't sit down and focus (*small laugh*)."

As brought up in previous examples, she emphasizes the internet as a particularly strong lure to her tendency of distractibility. She elaborates, "So, I guess most of the time it does happen when I'm just thinking about doing it. And then I'll get on the internet, and then, like, try to like, start something, but then get distracted, and then I can't focus, and, then I just kinda give up." For the Contradictive Learner, her inability to focus is at the core of her contradictory experience.

The final student of relevance here is the Returning Student, not yet introduced. He is thus named due his status as a student returning to college as an adult. He is also the oldest student interviewed. At 35 years of age, he is outside the age range initially intended for the students in this study. However, as in the similarly unintended cases of the Retired Teacher and the Graduate Student, this interview was also nonetheless conducted and included. As a brief synopsis of this student: after an initially rocky try at college many years earlier, and the decision to instead leave and go another route, he recently left the corporate world he ended up to return to school in order to pursue his lifelong dream of becoming a vocalist. At the time of the interview he was in his sophomore year as a music major.

A theme for him, particularly expressed when it comes to studying, is his short-term attention span. In finding that he "can't stay in my apartment and study for long periods of time," he describes the

coffeeshop as a suitable context for his attraction to distraction. He talks about liking to break up his segments of time, and this setting offering many possibilities and distractions:

So I'll take my laptop over to Caribou, and sit there, as a social aggregate, for, ya know, hours. Because there are people fussing around, and, everyone once in awhile, somebody will come in that I know. And, a coffeehouse, of course, ya know, there are tons of people going there. So, I'll sit there, and I'll play my music, cause I have that always going, cause I can't have silence. So, I'll always have music playing. And my computer automatically launches five tabs. So it has all the usual things that I want – blackboards, e-mails, facebook (*laughs*), and all those things. So, as I'm doing stuff, I can, ya know, take a break mentally, and play, Farmville or something else, ya know, something ridiculous. Or, go chat to the person at the table over there, or flirt with somebody over there, or just something like that . . . It breaks up the monotony.

Where the Restless Creator finds her partner “disparagingly” calling her ADD on “bad days,” the Young Professor expresses efforts towards “getting better” about her ADD qualities, and both the Sociologist in Waiting and the Contradictive Learner blame an ADD-like inability to focus as the primary impediment to beginning their school assignments, the Returning Student portrays his penchant for distraction as a means to “break up the monotony.” In addition to the Restless Creator, he is the only to self-describe using ADD-related terms in positive, or even neutral terms. Although he does not refer to it with the same sense of frustration as the Contradictive Learner, he also highlights the instantaneously multiple avenues of stimulation provided by the computer, and the internet in particular, as easily available avenues of distraction. Additionally like her, he expresses the context of stimuli offered by the setting of a coffeeshop as his preferred setting for studying.

In addition to these five instances in which participants describe themselves “as ADD,” with short-term attentions, and/or inability to focus, the sentiment appears in two others interviews, in reference to others. Both professors, the Forever Explorer and the Retired Teacher both make observations about this phenomenon generationally, in regards to the changes they have seen over the years in their students. For the Forever Explorer, his concern is complementary to that which he expresses for the extinction of time for play and imagination :

I think, ya know, kids these days, especially when they're in school, and have a lot of responsibilities, and it- Like, here, they're at school, and work, and they feel like everything's a hurry. And then they have all the, all these things comin in, to help to hype that up. It's funny you mentioned this because my wife and I were talking about this, this morning and I did not tell her I was coming. She brought it up. She said, you know, all this ADD that people seem to have, well, a lot of it seems like, maybe, it's forced into them by this media structure. And, ya know, even just, if you watch t.v. you see the jump-cut editing going on. And the short-attention spans it's warping. Ya know, everything's less than 2 or 3 seconds, ya know. Never dwell on any one thing for too long, ya know.

The Retired Professor offers a similar assessment in relaying:

I think I could safely say, that it is becoming increasingly harder to hold attention in the classroom. And then, if I thought there were anything, as far as what's different, is because, I think, that people are so used to (*noise like hitting something*) hitting the remote, and whatever, and, instant clicking off, and having three layers on the computer at the same time . . . Even though I was always the one who liked to engage students, but, the students now - I hate to use the word shorter attention span, I don't particularly want to use that. But, still, used to things happening at . . . It's critical that they are engaged in the work.

Both professors express concern for lack of focus and ability to engage as exhibited by their students. Both highlight technology as an encouraging force and both specifically mention the problem of shorter-term attention spans with the students they see today. While one specifies the television and the other the computer, the invention and evolution of both of these products represent great significance for the consideration of generational comparisons.

Perfectionism

The second cluster of temporally implied vocabulary words revolves around the common theme of perfectionism, additionally including the 'Type A' personality mentioned in the literature review, and the similar references to obsessive-compulsiveness, and identifying as having an anal personality. The similarities shared by this list seemed worth investigation in their appearance in over half (8 of 15) of the interviews. Four participants identified themselves as perfectionists, three refer to themselves as obsessive or obsessive compulsive, two specifically self-describe as being "type A," and two label themselves as anal.

All three of the female professors exhibit identification within this list. They also share in their presentation of their perfectionistic tendencies as having undergone improvement, with each of them referring to them as once stronger in the past, but as less applicable to the present (i.e., as “improved”). In talking about the change in her temporal perception pre and post diagnosis, the Retired Teacher shares the observation: “And, probably, I’m not as, uh, concerned about getting every second. I don’t think I’m quite as anal (*laughs*).”

Similarly, in addition to her partner’s labeling of her as ADD, the Restless Creator similarly refers to herself as “Type A.” Yet, like the Retired Teacher, she also talks about this perfectionistic quality as one which has become less prominent in her life:

I think, ya know, kinda being a Type A, uh, at some point, you realize, you are not what you accomplish. There are other things about you that are good besides all of the things that you do. And, and figuring out what’s important and what’s not. Oh my gosh. I mean, not that that doesn’t change, every day, and not that there aren’t deadlines that desperately need to be met, and that are very important. But als- But being able to discern, I think that that’s definitely with age. And- My sense of self-worth . is not . . based on, how many things that I do in a day. Or, ya know, that kind of thing. There’s more quality goin on I think.

The Young Professor, the youngest and most temporally anxious of the group of female professors describes her perfectionistic qualities in some detail:

I’m a bit perfectionistic, I can be a bit, a workaholic. Not for the money or anything, but just for- I like, I really pride myself on doing good work. And so, I really had to get back- Especially with the writing, that , it’s a book chapter, it’s a journal article. No matter how I write it, I couldn’t think it’s perfect. And I think writing is a process, I’m never done with it. So, I hate to let my writing go. And get, well, you know, kinda judged out there. But, I have to let it go. You know, whatever I write, I will probably change something. So, I’ve learned to settle – not settle, but, understand, like, good enough is fine. It doesn’t have to be flawless. I still send good quality work out. But, not so much where, I think it’s flawless and perfect. Cause, I’ll never get there. Yeah.

In this quote she aligns perfectionism with her workaholic tendencies, highlighting her standards for writing as a primary example. Yet, as the other female professors, she also asserts improvement in her learning to “let it go” and that it is “not worth that time” to strive towards an impossible ideal of perfection.

Where three out of three female professors refer to themselves as perfectionists, only one of the four male faculty members uses such vocabulary. That one professor is the Poetic Agent who elaborates upon his statement that he usually is not satisfied with what he has accomplished at the end of a given day or week, explaining:

If I did, I might risk that horrible condition known as contentment. And I'm perpetually dissatisfied with what I'm able to accomplish. Uh, but, that's partially because of my perfectionistic tendencies. I tend to take a maximalist approach to things. Well, just take as an example, this summer, okay. So, since, ya know, classes are done, I've done . let's see, a book review, um, done the first author responses for the first edition of a new journal I'm a co-editor of, uh, got the author responses out for that. Did a book chapter, and a scholar's article. And, ya know, I'm going, 'Well, why didn't I do more?' So, I'm always second-guessing myself and saying, why didn't I do more. But, it's not, so much— And this is probably the answer, like the conventional answer, but for a somewhat different reason . . Um , the rationale for that is not so much because of this idea that 'well, there aren't enough hours in the day,' but, I always reflect it back upon myself, and say, 'Well, alright, what am I doing or not doing, that would enable me to expand the scope of my activities.

In comparison with the female professors, he describes his perfectionism in a more positive light. While every woman expressed her perfectionism as waning in favor of more realistic, even healthier expectations, the Poetic Agent presents his perfectionism from a more positive angle. Although the Restless Creator came to a similar realization "that it's not a question of there's not enough time," but that, "I have too many things to do," where she responded to the growing list of "more to do" with efforts towards its minimization through prioritization, the Poetic Agent takes a more positive, even celebratory stance towards his unrealistic goals as a motivator. He emphasizes his perpetual drive towards doing more, not as a result of the perspective of having too little time, but as a result of his choosing to take a maximalist approach to things.

The use of perfectionistic vocabulary also appears in four of the interviews with students. More balanced along gender lines than in the case of the professors, two female and two male students employed the terminology. In the first interview conducted, the Young Mother frequently refers to her perfectionist tendencies and to herself as a perfectionist. These mentions crop up behind the drive she expresses feeling to do more or to do better (including: being hard on herself when she earns a 95%

instead of 100%, not wanting to take time off from school after the birth of daughter for fear of falling behind in school, feeling guilty about taking her mother up on her offers to watch her daughter, and her search at the time of the interview for a part-time job to add to an already quite full plate. In her own words, she relays:

Cause, I'm the type - I'm a perfectionist. I have to get everything done. And if I don't, I will go crazy. Like, I don't like to leave tasks undone. That's just me, like, I can't stand that. Like, I have to get it done. One way or the other . . . I mean, I've always been the type, where, in school, I always made As and Bs. If I didn't, like, I would just go crazy. Well, I wouldn't- I wouldn't say go crazy, but I won't let it go . . . And my mom says, you don't need to do that, cause that might, ya know, stress you out a lot. So, you need to just, don't worry about it, just try to do better on the next test, or homework, or somethin like that. And I try to do that. But, I just be focused on that one grade. I just can't get past it.

While she implies a negativity associated with her perfectionism (its capacity to make her “go crazy”), it is her mother who directly emphasizes its stressful effects, suggesting that she worry less. Like the other (and additionally, also older) women interviewed, her mother recognizes a need for the minimization of perfectionistic tendencies. Yet, despite her own mother’s encouragement, the Young Mother reports that regardless of her attempts, that she finds herself hung-up on instances which exhibit her imperfection, such as a bad grade that she “just can’t get past.”

The Contradictive Learner describes herself using the terms anal and obsessive. Yet, where others use similar descriptions to convey trying to do too much, too perfectly, she presents these descriptors as impediments to getting started:

I’m kind of like, a really anal person when it comes to how things are done. And so, sometimes if I don’t feel, um, if I don’t like the way, like, things look, in a certain place where I’m studying, I just can’t do- I have to lay, everything out a certain way . . . And, I, ugh, it’s just, it’s like I, I really need to get over. Like, a lot of the reasons for not getting things done are just because (*somewhat laughing*) I don’t feel like it. And then, so, I spend like time, waiting, doing like, really nothing. Nothing productive. Well, just miscellaneous things. Or, I’ll spend a lot of time, maybe writing, like the header on my paper, for my notes. And then, getting started and not liking how a certain thing I wrote looked . I guess. And then, ya know, starting over. I wish I could explain, like, the particulars but I feel like it varies, everytime. Cause sometimes I can get it over and get it done. But sometimes, I’m just like, I don’t like the way I feel right now . And I don’t want to get this done. And so, ya know, I’ll do, all those like kinda miscellaneous things. Maybe I’ll start, like,

a folder or a notebook, or something, or, I'll do things with my school stuff, just not my actual schoolwork. Just, uh, it's . I don't know, like (*laughing*) obsessive behavior.

She aligns these qualities of being “obsessive” and an “anal” person with her distractibility towards miscellaneous things. Like the other women, she presents these traits as impediments. Yet, unlike the others, she does not emphasize efforts towards the minimization of these traits.

The mentions of relevance by male students came from the Returning Student and the Graduate Student. The Returning Student presents himself as a “Type A,” “list person:”

I'm classic type A personality. So, I'm a list-person, and I have calendars and everything, and organized and, um. An hour will slip by and I had no idea that it – it's like I blinked. And, that to me is interesting from a time perspective. At the end of the day I'm usually . . . frustrated, that I didn't have enough time. Especially with school . . . Like, I love structure, and I love to constantly be moving and doing things, constantly be involved in something that's going on. And, if I don't have structure, I'll create structure. Whereas, some people will just go with the punches, I don't do that.

Although he mentions frustration, he seems to mostly present these characteristics in a relatively positive light, saying, “I love to constantly be moving and doing things,” and aligning them with his preference for structure. He offers his experience studying at the coffeeshop as distracting, but also conducive to his ultimate focus and productivity. In contrast is the experience of the Contradictive Learner who reports her distractions just providing derailment from her original intent.

The final participant of relevance to this section is the Graduate Student. He refers to himself as a perfectionist on several occasions and even describes himself as “obsessive-compulsive-like.” In regards to his schoolwork, he says, “I'm very much a perfectionist. If I know that something's gonna take a long time, either I start early, and, just really work at my own pace and not worry about it. And that's when my best work comes out. And, sometimes I will put it off, and then end up staying up half the night to finish it. So, um . I tend to take a lot of time . uh, for my thought.” He adds, “I'm very perfectionistic in the way I cook too.”

Like some others (the female professors in particular), he refers to these tendencies as something he has improved upon, sharing: "I'm not a perfectionist to the point where, my life falls apart. You know what I mean? Like, I like to get things done well, but I'm okay with letting things – Stepping back and saying, okay, this is as much time as I can spend on this. I'm lettin it go. I've become better at that, probably, with grad school. Yeah." The effort thus insinuates the negative perception of perfectionism. The description is quite similar to the Young Professor in that both pinpoint graduate school as an experience ultimately leading to the efforts at being able to "let things go" (a phrase that both use). As one of three males self-identifying perfectionist traits, he is the only to insinuate a negative perception, as based in his expressed effort at minimizing these tendencies.

Of the total group, the majority (9 of 15) used the vocabulary of temporal implication as considered here. Three participants described themselves with the specific ADD label: the Young Professor, the Restless Creator, & the Sociologist in Waiting. Two emphasized the inability to focus and/or proneness to distraction as are hallmarked features of the diagnosis: the Contradictive Learner and the Returning Student. Thus, a total of 5 participants fit into the ADD cluster of identification. Eight participants used perfectionistic terms to self-describe. The Young Mother and the Young Professor identified as perfectionist, in addition to the Poetic Agent and the Graduate Student who identify as both perfectionist and obsessive. The Returning Student and the Restless Creator both describe themselves as "ADD," the Retired Teacher as anal, and the Contradictive Learner as both anal and obsessive.

Of the nine total represented by these groups, seven conveyed their temporally implicated self-descriptions in negative terms. All three female professors present themselves as having improved/minimized their ADD/perfectionist behavior and convey this positively, directly or indirectly suggesting negative connotations of its presence. The Young Mother and the Graduate Student both also express efforts to minimize these tendencies, with the latter reporting success. The Sociologist in Waiting and the Contradictive Learner both provide their temporally implied characteristics as obstacles to their schoolwork. These seven negative presentations outweigh the count of two participants offering these

tendencies in a more positive light. As a short list in contrast, both the Poetic Agent and the Returning Student describe their perfectionistic and Type A habits (respectively) as within the context of their personalities as descriptive, even celebratory (“maximalist,” “love constancy”), but not as characteristics they would like to change.

Generally speaking, the ties of these terms to matters of temporal experience revolve around the notion of having more to do. This was the case whether doing more in terms of breadth of activities (i.e., doing more in a day or week, usually the case with ADD-related qualities), or doing more in terms of spending more time with certain things, to an unnecessary, even obsessive degree, in the name of perfection. The Restless Creator’s articulation of her restlessness as the attempt to fit 36 hours into a 24 hours day particularly draws out the temporal roots of her ADD-like behavior.

In considering the quintessential examples for this section on linguistic implications of time, 3 specific cases stand out. The Contradictive Learner, the Restless Creator, and the Young Professor are three of the four participants who fall into both the ADD and perfectionist categories of self-description. In consideration for the entire group of 15, these are also the same three which seem to represent the greatest degree of angst/frustration in their temporal experience. Where, towards the goals of perfection, the Young Professor sacrifices her sleep, her diet, and her overall health, the Restless Creator similarly recounts her cyclically “hysterical” struggles with a 36 hour schedule, and the Contradictive Learner characterizes her temporal temperament as one stuck in disjunction between how she would like to spend her time and how she actually does, highlighting her inability to focus as a prime impediment. Given the amplified relevance of these cases due to their overlapping consideration, in addition to the overwhelming nature of these terms’ presentations in a negative light, these factors perhaps suggest this vocabulary as specifically apt at expressing the frustrating components of temporal experience.

Experience of Time

Three topics comprise this section on the experience of time: Agency & Boundaries, Health, and Technology. The last two topics had surfaced early on, in the literature review, and thus were intended as part of the coding scheme before the interviewing process even began. Yet, through the progression of interviews, the interrelated issues of agency and boundaries asserted their undeniable centrality to the experience of time. Glaringly rooted within so many of the narrations of temporal experience, the consideration of agency and boundaries provides the initial framework of this section.

Agency & Boundaries

Although the themes of agency and boundaries have run beneath many of the considerations thus far, they have not received much direct attention. Especially within those regarding the individual, or personal, or subjective experience of time, many ideas in the literature called forth or implied related issues, including: overwork, the intrusion of work into leisure time or time at home, the intensification of social acceleration eroding temporal and spatial boundaries, the increasingly instantaneous capabilities of new technologies, etc. In the previous section on vocabulary, these implications again arose beneath the metaphorical ties between time and paid labor, and particularly in the notion of temporal categories of ownership. Yet, it was not until progressing through the interviews and fine-tuning the coding framework that I truly realized how ingrained these topics are to my intended exploration. Thus, in recognition for the fundamental components they are, they represent the bulk of detail for this section on the experience of time.

The issue of agency was pervasive and often prominent, with many of the narratives revolving around that theme. Although the theme ran through the course of many interviews, an initial question asking the participant to discuss their gauge of whether they feel they have enough time provided particular insight. The theme of boundaries was additionally and relatedly prominent. The concept of

temporal boundaries intends to represent the theme of interviewees sectioning off certain days and times for certain behaviors and activities.⁶⁰

Not only did the issues of agency and boundaries assert their significance, their emergence also revealed intriguing patterns. Although they appeared throughout the interviews, concerns of agency and boundaries were more often directly considered and articulated by the professors. While differences between this group and the group of students suggest significance, the most poignant comparison which emerged was within the group of professors, between the female professors and the male professors. The comparison between these two groups presented layers of revealingly inter-related connections. Even though this study had no original intention to pursue the relationship between gender and temporal experience, as the most dominantly overt and one of the most insightful comparisons to the notion of temporal experience, it seemed the only option to reflect this in the analysis. The discussion is therefore divided between the professors and the students, with the former group further dividing on the basis of gender and also taking the bulk of the discussion.

The Professors

Within the group of professors, one of the most prominent themes was an emphasis on boundaries. Likely a direct relation to stage in life, it was a theme most apparent in the division of time based upon boundaries structured around paid employment. A theme which appeared largely in relation to boundaries, sense of agency was another prominent theme. While in most instances the relationship between boundaries and agency yielded a multilayered dynamic, an *overall* pattern found that participants who tended towards the successful maintenance of temporal boundaries in their lives also tended to express a sense of agency in relation to time. The link between boundaries and agency found further affirmation in the case of the link between their respective lack and absence as well. Thus, this

⁶⁰ Although a boundary sometimes overlapped with a temporal category (e.g., Saturday = free time), these were often separate considerations.

general rule seemed to divide participants into two classes: those emphasizing a sense of both, and those emphasizing a lack of both. The division seemed appropriate to label as the distinction between those with an active sense of time versus those with a passive sense of time.

This divide became all the more pronounced, and intriguing, in unfolding to reveal correspondence with a greater division along the lines of gender. This rule held true in each and every case. Where every male professor indicated an active sense of time, every female professor indicated a passive sense of time. The range and potential paths of implications rolled out from here. The gendered divide provides the framework of discussion, with consideration first for the men and then the women.

The Men

Tending towards a more active stance regarding time, the men tended to express both efforts towards creating and maintaining temporal boundaries as well as a sense of temporal agency. As mentioned, while sense of agency dwelled within many of the participants' observations about time, one of the more directly related questions came at the beginning of the interview, in asking "Generally speaking, at the end of an average day or week, do you feel that you have had enough time?" Only two responded that they generally felt this way. An additional two responded that they sometimes have this sense, but that it was rare and/or contextually based. Thus, those who answered affirmatively represented a small minority. This small group contained one male professor and one male student.

As the one professor who answered in the affirmative for a sense of having enough time, the Forever Explorer provides a quintessential example of a positive relationship between boundaries and agency, and provides a fitting first case here. Taken as a whole, in many ways this interview set the bar in exemplifying a healthy relationship to time.⁶¹ To that initial question he answered: "Usually . . . With an

⁶¹ With degree of health as informally gauged by positive attitude and lack of frustration/conflict expressed in perception of time, as well as impact of temporal perception on physical and mental health (most prominent in those detrimental situations of sacrificing self-care habits, such as sleep, in the name of busyness).

asterisk by it, depending on how many interruptions there are. But, yeah, most of the time. . . It goes up and down, but, usually, I feel like I have.” As one of only two from the entire group of fifteen, his generally affirmative answer alone ranks him in the upper echelons of agency.

Yet, of the entire sample, he was also the one to most directly express the greatest efforts towards the maintenance of temporal boundaries. The parameters of his boundaries rest in that outdated division of the 9 to 5, Monday through Friday work week. Although not stipulated by his job, they are parameters he strives to maintain on his own. He expresses striving to keep work at the office, and to keep time spent at the office to weekday days. In line with the standard parameters of preceding generations, he says he does his best to maintain evenings and weekends clear of work related tasks/responsibilities.

While he may not be successful 100% of the time, he relays the potential dangers of not maintaining these boundaries as a primary motivator to stick to them as much as possible:

Like, last weekend I was grading papers. It encroaches. I try to keep focused at work, so I can put boundaries around it. Cause I just have seen too many people get consumed by their jobs to the point where they, ya know, don’t have health. Don’t have a life. But, ya know, there are times when it encroaches. My wife has projects with deadlines she has to work on the weekends, or, ya know, late at night, or whatever. Sometimes I do too. I just, ya know, you just do what you gotta do. We try to keep it balanced so we don’t have that all the time.

So, although work does “encroach” upon that time he seeks to keep separate, this is an exception to the rule. The quote conveys the drive behind his efforts towards boundaries, towards the rule of keeping work contained temporally to weekdays during the day, and spatially to his on-campus office. As will be seen, the pattern of such temporal-spatial overlappings for the men in this section highlights the enforcement provided in adding a spatial layer to intended temporal bounds. The quote further emphasizes a sense of agency in the implication of its relation to boundaries. The effort towards constructing temporal boundaries implies a sense of control in the shaping of temporal designations to one’s own determinations. That sense underlies these temporal boundaries as a concentrated effort against being “consumed by” work.

As the boundaries act to confine work, they serve to protect that outside of it. More than any other participant (except perhaps the Retired Teacher) the Forever Explorer emphasizes the significance of reserving weekly and daily segments of time beyond work, mentioning several themes and activities important for reservation. The arenas of family, hobbies, and friends seem to take the bulk. More than any other participant, he mentioned several scheduled activities outside of work related to the pursuit of personal hobbies or interests. At the time of the interview he was participating in piano lessons, fencing lessons, and yoga on a weekly basis.⁶² As considered earlier, he makes reference to “family time” as that including such things as being at home with his family, going to movies/concerts with wife, going with his kids on a hike, or even going on a walk with their dogs (whom he emphasizes as a part of the family). The interplay between boundaries and agency is reflected here too. While boundaries encourage a sense of agency over one’s time, a sense of agency reciprocates in providing a sense of control necessary to enforce and make boundaries matter.

Yet, more than any specific activity, his reiterated emphasis on spontaneity seems to epitomize his relationship to agency and boundaries, and perhaps even best distills his temporal orientation. To recall an earlier shared excerpt, he describes the value he holds of spontaneity, both for himself and his family:

We don’t schedule it so much. Except if we’re going away on the weekend or something like that. We just, try to do it. I mean, we like to have freedom to be- We all pretty much like to spontaneous about, some of our time, at least. School makes people over-structured and work makes people over-structured. And then . . . gotta have time where you just- that’s free, ya know, it’s not like written down . Just do what everybody wants. So, that’s what we do.

This emphasis emphasizes both the significance of boundaries, in the necessary reservation of time beyond work, and especially agency, in the sense of freedom and structure-less-ness inherent to the

⁶² At the time of the interview, he had been taking fencing lessons for about 8 years. It was an activity initiated on the basis of his two sons’ interest when they were young, and one they had all maintained. The piano lessons he initiated on his own upon turning 50, as he explains it as something he had always wanted to do, and found the impetus of this mile-stone birthday as a reason to find a new challenge to pursue.

experience itself. The sentiment in fact represents the essence of his namesake, conjuring the scene of his exploratory stance at the forests' edge as a child:

When you asked this question about time in the beginning, I thought, well, that might not be the right question to ask, cause . I'm the kid who used to walk out his door, and look at the forest and go, ya know, 'huh' and just wander out. My parents- It drove my parents crazy. Just go get lost in the woods, ya know. By myself, or with my friends, and, um, see what turned out. And that's kinda how my career has happened too. Ya know, just kinda pokin around.

In terms of his relationship to temporal agency and boundaries, in these ways the Forever Explorer sets a prime example for the male tendency towards an active stance towards time. He asserts a sense of agency in describing the reservation of a choose-your-own-adventure type of spontaneity, and its reciprocation with the creation and maintenance of boundaries, particularly to keep evenings and weekends free, in order to ensure the opportunity. Far from endowing time with the power to dictate/overwhelm, he instead approaches it as a realm of possibility inviting him to make the best of it. As a kid drawn towards exploring the woods, he seems to approach time in the same way, as a palette for him from which to create his own scenery. It seems that the child explorer has grown into the adult explorer, and the scenery of the forest evolved into the spontaneous opportunities present in even daily life.

Of the four male professors interviewed, the professor referred to as the Poetic Agent, as suggested by his namesake, most explicitly detailed his conviction about temporality as a matter of free will. First, to the initial question of the interview, although he responds with the most common answer of lacking the sense of having enough time, he stands out in nonetheless emphasizing his own control in the scenario. An earlier considered quote, he implies choice in presenting the scenario of "enough time" as one in contradiction with his identification as a perfectionist and his goals of accomplishment. He reports, "If I did [have enough time], I might risk that horrible condition known as contentment. And I'm perpetually dissatisfied with what I'm able to accomplish. Uh, but, that's partially because of my perfectionistic tendencies. I tend to take a maximalist approach to things." So, while he may report not

feeling as though he has enough time for all he would like to accomplish, he claims an underlying sense of agency in implying the choice of avoiding that scenario as one in opposition to his self-perception.

As he elaborates later in the interview, the sense of agency is not just a reality he holds for himself. He aligns temporal experience with free will on a universal level:

I think, fundamentally, really, when push comes to shove, deep down everybody really does spend time the way they want to. I mean, whether they'd like to confront that or not. The fundamental thing is, we are free agents. And, ya know, like I tell, particularly my undergraduates and graduates . . . Undergrads, ya know, they go 'oh, ya know, can't stand this course, argghh,' and, ya know, hey, every course in college is an elective. Every one. Because, ya know, you can choose a major that has said requirements, or that doesn't. Or a school that has this requirement, or that doesn't. And it's up to you. I mean, now I don't want to be a, ya know, the silly kind of free agency, ya know, where it's like, 'Oh, poverty? It's your choice.' But, I mean, I think in terms of prioritization of things like that, you reach a certain, fundamental level of human autonomy. And, I'm not talking about situations where people are scraping for a free human existence. That's a totally different issue. But, um, I think, in particular, when you're talking about, ya know, professional people, and all that sort of thing, that, how you wind up spending your time, is largely a reflection of where you have decided to place your priorities. And like with my colleagues here, things like, 'oh, yeah, I just don't have the time to do all this, that, and the other' - And it's like, well, ya know, take a look at, at what you've decided to do. Now, if you're comfortable with that, that's fine. But if you're not, then, change it, okay? We are how we spend our time. It doesn't just say a lot about us, I mean, it fundamentally winds up . . . being us. We do have some choices.

These last lines provide a poignant summary of his thoughts on temporal agency, and once again, even reflect a deeper orientation to time. While he draws a line for people in poverty or those 'scraping' to get by, he otherwise charges people with responsibility over their temporal experience. In the example of colleagues who complain about not having enough time, he asserts the need for people in such a situation of frustration to take the initiative towards changing it. Although a person who feels as though he does not get everything done that he would like to accomplish, his example nonetheless highlights his sense of choice by distinguishing himself, and others, as "free agents" when it comes to temporal experience. As a person who feels he doesn't get everything done he would like, this example highlights his sense of choice in the situation in distinguishing himself from those who complain about the situation, failing to take control over a situation in which they find themselves unhappy.

Although the Poetic Agent is the most direct of the group in his feelings on agency, he is the least so in terms of direct efforts towards temporal boundaries. While every other male professor expresses the explicit drawing of temporal boundaries around work, with the addition of spatial boundaries to enforce, the Poetic Agent refers to boundaries in a less direct way.

Instead, he illustrates his perception of boundaries in categorizing three arenas towards which he spend the bulk of his time. He laughingly relays, "it's so corny because it's more or less the, it's like the YMCA triad. It's like, the uh, the intellectual dimension, and, the physical dimension, and I guess you could say the interpersonal, slash spiritual dimension." Although these dimensions are a less blatant form of temporal boundary, as he explains, these divisions represent the components he conceptualizes in structuring his time:

Basically, that's how I divvy it up. And, I don't think those three dimensions need to be competitive. But, the way that human beings structure time - I don't see them as competitive, but, I think virtually everyone does because they see time as kind of a zero sum situation, where, if you're devoting time to one thing, it necessarily is going to eat into something else . . . Well, I think they're complementary. I think there's a huge amount of synergy between those dimensions, where, if you're ignoring one, then oddly enough, you reach a situation where the more, raw hours, uh, and energy you devote to some of the others . if you're off-balance, then, you're just gonna be spinning your wheels. And (*chuckles*) this happens, most often, in things like, mmm, theses . . . So I mean it, it is a balancing act. But, I- I think the whole idea, the reason we have those multiple demands on our time, is, is because, ya know, we're not uni-dimensional.

In elaborating upon these components, he shares that the physical aspect is most routinized. The primary anchor of his day, he says that it is normal for him to plan the rest of his time according to when and what type of working out he will be doing. He finds "the intellectual dimension is the most complex, because, there are the most different aspects of that. Only a few of which, are actually captured in things like, university and tenure criteria." He stresses the inter-related web of reading, researching and writing as representative of primary intellectual activities. Although he presents the interpersonal arena as the one in which he experiences the most turbulence, even here he finds himself maintaining (more-or-less) routine-like behavior, including daily/weekly conversations and monthly/yearly visits with his long distance partner. Although he stresses that he prefers to schedule these visits in the short-term, more

spontaneously, rather than far in advance, that they occur on a several month average relays a degree of regularity.

Although not as tangible as the boundaries set by the clock or calendar, his perception of these dimensions as temporal boundaries makes them just as relevant. Like the Forever Explorer he also emphasizes the balance of these boundaries/dimensions as integral to a harmonious temporal experience. Both offer examples of stressed out colleagues as examples in antithesis to their own, and those they seek to avoid. Where the Forever Explorer divides time between work and not work, the Poetic Agent divides between the intellectual, physical, and interpersonal. While he does also talk about another division - that between sacred and profane time - and utilizes these terms to articulate his own specific experiences, it is the division between the intellectual, physical, and interpersonal/spiritual realms that find greatest relevance in his everyday life and experience of time.

Of the total group of four male professors, two remain for consideration of orientation to boundaries and agency. These two are the oldest and youngest of the four, respectively, the Department Head and the New Professor. Although each to his own degree, they maintain the male pattern of boundary construction paired with a sense agency, which when compared with the women, implies a genderized theme of a temporally active orientation.

As might be expected in regards to his title, the Department Head responds to the question of whether he feels he has enough time in stating, "Once in awhile I do, but, most of the time, almost on a daily basis, I leave here [the on-campus office] thinking there's something left undone. There usually is something left undone, but that's different from actually feeling it. Sometimes, at the end of the week, I'll go, oh, okay, I've got everything done. But that's fairly rare." Although this quote might superficially convey a lack of control in that he expresses routinely not getting everything done, the greater sense of agency shines through in his *choosing* "to leave here" *despite* "thinking there's something left undone." Not only does this quote highlight his sense of agency, it further implies the significance of boundaries to it. His association with leaving his office to leaving things undone implies that once he leaves the confines

of that space, he is finished with work for the day. He implies here the importance of the temporal-spatial boundaries he sets around work as a primary foundation of his temporal experience.

Like the Forever Explorer, he also aims to maintain a weekly schedule similar to that once-standard 9 to 5 work week, even though a bit extended. He reports a rough work schedule of 9 to 5 or 6 Monday through Friday plus Saturday afternoons. He tends towards a six day work week, although he does sometimes find this extending to seven. Implying the spatial aid in maintaining these temporal boundaries, this work time is almost always spent in his on-campus office. Though he does report sometimes doing work-related things at home, particularly keeping up with e-mail, he aims to keep this to a minimum.

Affirming his active orientation to time, when asked to elaborate on those instances in which he finds “everything done,” he responds in describing the more common scenario in which “being done” conveys reaching that point personally, rather than reaching the end of a to-do list. He makes the distinction that:

Sometimes, I find that I will just say, okay, I’m done for the day. I’m not— And, often if that happens, I’ll actually even leave quote, early, you know. I’ll leave at like, 4 or something: ‘You know what, I’m just leaving, I’m done.’ It’s not that everything’s done, but I’m more like - whatever isn’t done really didn’t have to be done anyway. So, I’m just gonna sort of clear out of my head, and go do something else. So, that, that’s sort of how that plays out. It’s rare that it’s like, okay, everything’s done and then I can go home. It’s more often the situation of, you know, I’ve done everything I can, I’ve got other things to do, I’m just gonna let it go this time.

In this quote he again highlights the centrality of agency and boundaries to his sense of time. He particularly emphasizes his sense of agency in highlighting the significance of perspective, deciding that those tasks left undone “really didn’t have to be done” and allowing himself to just “let it go.” In taking this perspective, he enforces a boundary around work, and exercises control by keeping work contained by parameters of time and space in order to grant credence to the “other things” in his life. Like the other male professors, his maintenance of personally constructed temporal boundaries seems to share in a reciprocal relationship with sense of temporal agency.

The youngest male professor, the New Professor, conveys a similar demeanor towards temporality. His status as a new professor earns his name. At 34 years old he is the youngest male professor and only one year older than the Young Professor. Following the suit of the other male professors, his orientation to time shows most obviously in his adherence to temporal-spatial boundaries as constructed around work.

As true for the Forever Explorer and the Department Head, the New Professor also expresses setting boundaries around the time he spends working by relegating that activity to the location of his on-campus office. He is less precise than the Department Head about the specific hours he spends at the office, but more like the Forever Explorer in designating weekday days as the range of time to which he aims to confine his work. He does, however, share that he usually leaves the office by early evening, joking (at least partially) that if it gets to be past five or six o'clock in the evening and he is not yet home, that he will start getting "angry phone-calls" from his wife. Perhaps an even greater influence in the roots of his maintenance of temporal-spatial boundaries, he shares that as a graduate student, his wife introduced to him the idea of renting a library carol to study. He reports developing appreciation for the success of this approach in its ability to minimize opportunities for distraction or procrastination, particularly in regards to e-mail.

To the question of not having enough time, he responds that he doesn't usually feel he has enough at the end of the day, but he nonetheless exerts his own role in this sense in blaming his tendency towards procrastination. He pinpoints e-mail as one of his greatest distractions and remarks that he feels it would probably be best for him to limit his checking his e-mail to only several times a week, and that this would likely improve his efficiency at work. Yet, despite this distraction at work, he nonetheless keeps work from spilling beyond the office location. If for no other reason, he says he does not spend time on work outside of the office because too many distractions would take him off course. Thus, he follows the pattern of the other males professors in keeping work to the office.

Overall, the male professors share many commonalities in their orientation to time, with the concepts of boundaries and agency providing a sharp illustration. In response to the greater discretion over time granted them as professors, each of these four men expresses adherence to temporal boundaries, with particular highlight for the construction of boundaries around work. They each describe their daily and weekly schedules as largely based around work, with efforts to restrict work to weekdays, during the day, and to keep evenings and weekends free. While they range in rationale and degree of intent (with the youngest simply explaining the feeling that he cannot concentrate at home, to the only with a spouse and children making the concentrated effort to reserve “family time” and spontaneity) they all express dividing time into segments separating work and life beyond work, with three of the four designating the office as an additionally spatial boundary. Although within the details of the interviews they all express degrees of flexibility – occasions where they find themselves with work-related activities at home – they express mostly successful effort to maintain work to the spatial parameters of their on-campus offices. As the only to not directly stipulate this additional, spatial enforcement, that the Poetic Agent is also the only male professor living by himself suggests a potential link.

An equally resonant and seemingly entwined theme across the interviews with male professors emerged in the expression of temporal agency. From the assertion of temporal autonomy that “we are how we spend our time,” to the explicit decision to end the work day with goals left unfinished, sense of temporal agency played an additionally strong theme. Within the interviews with the male professors, the reciprocation between sense of temporal agency and the maintenance of temporal boundaries was prominent. The appropriateness of this combinations’ representation as an active orientation towards time was highlighted. Although an active temporal stance yields suggestion enough in the similarities exhibited across the men’s shared expressions, further clarification, and a greater, more intriguing picture finds itself within the contrasting patterns of the female professors.

The Women

Where the men tended towards adherence to temporal boundaries and expressions of temporal agency, the women tended towards not maintaining boundaries and voicing a lacking sense of agency when it comes to time. Where the men tended towards an experience of time appropriately summarized as active (even, arguably, actively balanced), the women tended towards an experience of time characterized by a sense of passivity (and even imbalance). In other words, where boundaries and agency characterized the more active temporal stance of the men, absence of boundaries and lack of agency characterized the more passive temporal stance of the women. While the themes of lack and absence were exhibited by each of the three female professors interviewed, another general rule emerging for this group found a contingency upon age, with the younger age of the woman, the stronger the degree of these traits. Thus, consideration for the group of the female professors finds an appropriate start with its quintessential and youngest example, the Young Professor.

As previously introduced, the Young Professor represents the essence of time-stress, the epitome of the experiential time-bind. Her answer to the first interview question of whether she feels she has enough time provides a suitable entrance into the factors of agency and boundaries in her temporal world. She answers:

No, not at all. And, I think that's just something I have to struggle with, the time balancing, management. And so, I really have to work hard with my personality, and nature, to make sure I make time for things that are also important like family and friends. Instead of over-privileging my job . . . It kinda works for you and against you, cause, you know I have flexibility, where I teach on certain days and then I write on certain days. But, because of the way I am as a writer, I can't write in a lot of noise. So, I almost am forced to write, either at home, or on weekends, just because that's where I get that quiet space. So I really have to work to make sure that no matter what, or where I am, at like 4 o'clock on Saturday, I'm done. I have the rest of the day to do what I want to do. Cause, I fear that if I don't do that, I'll burn-out. Or I'll start to resent the impact that the job has on my life. And I don't want my job to dominate everything I do.

So, right from this first response, she identifies the balancing and management of time as a personal struggle. It is a struggle she aligns (arguably resigns) to her nature or personality – a perception revealed earlier in the repeated self-identifications as a perfectionist and as ADD. She calls out the

flexibility of her profession as double-edged, conveying that such freedom can be dangerous (to a personality like her own) in allowing/encouraging the domination of her work at the expense of “things that are also important like family and friends.” She reflects that the lack of boundaries this flexibility allows can lead to the ‘over-privileging’ of work, in turn resulting in resentment, and ultimately burn-out. In expressing this turn of events as a scenario she fears for herself, she implies lacking a sense of agency, or control, over this outcome. She depicts her temporal stance as one poised in struggle, and in furthermore conveying a sense of powerlessness, implies a sense of passivity in relation to time. In contrast with the men who express relatively less stress for their work, she expresses fear for her job dominating her life and burning her out. In comparison, despite the expectedly heavy workload given his job, the Department Head even finds the ability to leave tasks undone, and at the office, without a sense of anxiety following him into his life outside those walls.

Although like the men, she does express the intention to put boundaries around her work, the difference in parameters and ultimate success sets her experience apart. In the previous quote she expresses the desire for and effort towards two forms of boundaries. First, she relays wanting a “quiet space,” (which ends up equating to home on the evenings and weekends) as a parameter she puts around part of her work. In this instance, temporal parameters are not so much pursued for the sake of personal boundary, as they are a byproduct of a characteristic requirement of quiet. More importantly, however, is that as far as the function of this boundary around work, it acts more to expand than contain. Instead of relegating her work to a designated work location, she actually expands the parameter of work from its once standard office location by relegating part of it to the setting of her home.⁶³ Instead of a boundary enforced to separate work from the rest of life, this distinction actually serves to blur these lines.

Also from the previous quote, her second mention of efforts towards boundaries is in her stating the establishment of a cut-off point from work over the weekend. Here she designates the time of 4

⁶³ It should be noted, however, that although her academic writing represents a component of her work, she makes clear through the interview her distinction between her roles as a professor/teacher and as a writer. Whereas she conveys the former as more chore-like and draining, the latter seems more personally enjoyable and less oriented to the necessity of a paycheck.

o'clock on Saturday as a dividing line, ensuring at least "the rest of the day to do what I want to do" as a mechanism she cites in effort against the path to burn-out. Yet, as mentioned in an earlier discussion, she shares that her intended efforts are not exactly congruent with how reality often plays out.

Her lack of agency is evoked just several lines down in the transcription, where she follows with an edit to this original claim. In response to her quote above, when in turn asked to elaborate on that time after 4 o'clock on Saturdays as time for her to do what she wants to do, she admits to a discrepancy between her words and reality. Revealing the wavering, permeable nature of her loosely formed boundaries at best, she admits:

There's probably what I say do (laughs), then, what I actually do (laughs). I try to map my schedule out by the week. And so I know where I am at all times, give myself - And I actually have to budget myself at least a day off. Which I don't always do. And if I do have to work on a Sunday, that's only two hours. I won't let myself work past that . . . Yeah, I don't mind working on a Saturday. I do resent working on a Sunday. You know, I get irritated if I have to work on a Sunday . . . I'm really cautious what I've seen happen to other people where they resent the job or they burn-out. And so I really do try to make sure I take care of myself.

In the same breath that she expresses recognition for the importance of drawing boundaries for herself around work, she concedes to her lack of success in doing so. While in the initial quote she expresses drawing the line at 4 p.m. on Saturdays on weekends, she here admits that this is not necessarily what actually happens. Here, a bit contradictorily, she goes on to say that she actually does not mind working on Saturdays, but that it's working on a Sunday which she resents. Yet, in the breath just preceding, she has already made the concession that if she does work on a Sunday, it's only two hours, yet just previous to that, she has already preceded these statements with the admission of sometimes not even making an effort to "budget" such time for herself to begin with. In jumping back and forth between expressions for the importance of boundaries on the one hand, and her inability to maintain them on the other, her jumbled depiction presents a sort of verbal caricature of her temporal experience as a whirlwind within which she finds herself caught.

Related to that seemingly inverse correlation between age and temporal stress, the second youngest female professor (in her early 50s) represents the second strongest case of lacking temporal boundaries and agencies. Her sense of lacking both temporal agency and boundaries shines in an earlier shared quote in which she elaborates on her feeling of never having enough time. Worth reprinting, she conveyed that:

When I was first in graduate school, even at that point in my life when I was already well into my, probably into my 30s – I used to call my dad, hysterical. And he would say, ‘Okay, honey. Everything that you have told me that you have to do,’ he said, ‘that adds up to about 36 hours in a day. And there are only 24. And so you have to figure out what you’re gonna do.’ So I would historic- I would make that phone call for years. And then, I would finally go, ‘Hi dad. Not enough hours in the day. How are you?’ But I would actually-- I didn’t catch on to that. That that was the problem, for a long time. That, it’s not a question of there’s not enough time; I have too many things to do.

Her words provide an exemplary fit for the theme of temporal passivity. Although she voices ultimate recognition for the culprit of an excessive to-do list, her historically primary frustration is expressed as the problem of “not enough hours in the day.” In other words, before coming to appreciate her own power in the situation, it seemed that time was in control. Like the frustration of the Young Professor struggling to make time for herself beyond work, the Restless Creator expresses frustration in the futile, re-occurring attempt to fit 36 hours into a day. In a manner not so different from the Young Professor (reminded of her limits in pushing herself beyond her physical/mental capacities), the Restless Creator draws a sense of powerlessness, even hysteria, accordant with an inability to draw temporally realistic boundaries.

Also like the Young Professor, the Restless Creator aligns her temporal struggles with her personality or nature, linking them in the interview to her Type A and perfectionistic tendencies. They both relatedly reflect upon having improved their temporal anxiety with age in pinpointing the improvement of such tendencies, asserting a degree of agency in conveying the control and guidance of maturity. The Restless Creator shared of this temporal shift:

I think this is about, this is about age, in the sense of maturity. I can let some things go. And I can say, 'this is just not done. And, it will get done. And, it will be okay, whenever that is.' Um . . . I have a colleague, who, much, much younger, and I think we are temperamentally very the same. And she tends to make herself crazy over getting everything done, perfectly. And, I thought, yeah, uh-hmmm, and it's gonna take her a long time (*laughs*) to kinda just say, 'Mmm, no it's not getting done today. Hmm, nope, it's not, and that's gonna be okay.' Um . [my partner] is a good measure. Sometimes, visually, I look at my calendar, and say, 'What are you thinkin? You really think you're gonna get all that done and do any of it half-way good? Guess again. Can't you just say, this is not a good time and try doing something else?' So, ya know, but that's, that's learning the hard way.

As described in the quote, though she recognizes improvement, especially in comparing herself with a younger colleague, she does find it an ongoing struggle to maintain realistic boundaries around her time and achieve a sense of temporal balance. While she has grown in her recognizing the need to do so, she nonetheless finds the need to routinely check in with her intended accomplishment for a day or week, realizing that she may need to adjust her expectations as her time actually unfolds. Or, as she put it, she's "learning the hard way."

As some other examples of her efforts towards a more active stance towards time, she does report success in having begun to structure boundaries around non-work activities throughout the week. She attends yoga class at least once, sometimes twice a week, meets with a graduate student for coffee every Wednesday, and every Friday afternoon, she takes the break she has between teaching and yoga to spend at the mall, just walking around, getting coffee, and people-watching. She describes these activities as relaxing and/or stress-relieving.

Thus, she has grown in her sense of temporal agency and ability to create and maintain boundaries. Yet, given her historical issues and the ongoing struggle it can still be for her to maintain the more assertive habits she has developed, her experience still sharply differs from the experience of the men who express little to no strife in the maintenance of their active stance towards time. Relatively speaking, the picture of her temporal orientation finds her leaning towards the side of temporal passivity.

The case of the final professor rounds out the themes presented by the other two females. Although the least temporally stressed of the women at the time of the interview, her experience still

aligns with the gendered patterns regarding agency and boundaries. Further, it provides a pattern which hints at implications for the influence of age upon the temporal orientations of the women.

Introduced in the discussion of temporal vocabulary, this participant's relationship to time is quite unlike any of the others. In receiving an unexpected diagnosis of cancer the year previous, she had recently faced a swiftly mandated adjustment in terms of her time. As the case with many of her responses through the interview, the issues of agency and boundaries find different contexts for her along the pre, versus post-diagnosis divide. In response to the question of having enough time, she answers in two accordant parts. Her response to how she felt when teaching provides an initial suggestion of her similarity with the other two female professors in lacking temporal boundaries around this role:

When I was working all the time - and I was always full-time - I never felt like I had enough time. Ever. And I think that, it's part of the joy of teaching. It's also part of the frustration. Because, you never, ever, feel like, that you have completed things. Because, there's always a challenge in a classroom. Always somebody who you're thinking, 'What else could I do? Could I do, as a teacher to reach this particular student?' So, it never feels like a total completion. So, I would say that, even though I consider myself, very well-organized, and very well-prepared - it was never that - but, always, at the back of my mind: 'Well, if I could do a little bit more of this, or that,' ya know.

Expressing a perpetual push towards an ever-extending extra mile, she implies as a teacher finding it difficult to put boundaries around that role. She articulates the difficulty in talking about never feeling completed and always feeling that she could have done more. Like the Young Professor and the Restless Creator, she expresses the feeling of wanting to do more with her time than time would allow.

She does though, however, also imply a degree of choice in going on to frame her teaching style as a personal ideal:

I always was much more hands-on, lots of group work, lots of interaction. And, therefore, means you're always pushing. I mean, if you teach like that, you're always pushing for more ways to get students to feel engaged in the material. So, therefore, it was teaching an ideal. And how to do something more. That's what I mean by the time. Ya know. Really thinking about more things, than just, 'Okay, here, here is something that I have read and marked somewhere.' Ya know? Well, and that takes time. To study that kind of thing.

Here she provides an account of her busyness which implies a sense of choice and acceptance in her recognition that “teaching an ideal” takes time. In a way, this awareness resembles the Poetic Agent’s assertion of his personality as guiding his “maximalist” approach to everything.

This unique example highlights that sense of temporal boundaries and agency do not necessarily entirely overlap. Although she acknowledges what was a constant sense of busyness from the role, the Retired Teacher also exhibits a love for teaching, a feeling of affinity extending beyond a paycheck, or even daily routine/anchor. In recognizing the priority of her teaching as a matter of identity, she acknowledges a sense of acceptance and even choice in the sacrifices she made in often not putting boundaries around this role:

I think part of it is, I go back to the word identity. Because, I was in a classroom, for, obviously, over 40 years, in different types of classrooms. But, that was so much a part of who I am . . . Family has always been important. And is important, and all of that. But I - you know there were many times when I was teaching, where, you know, weekends, I just had all these papers to grade. I had to do that. Or, I *thought* I had to do it (*laughs heartily*). Put it that way . . . To me it was very important to get papers back on time. I mean, I was always, *always*, ‘I gotta have these papers back.’ You know, and I read them! It wasn’t that I - I was not one of these who just turn a mark here and there. I mean, I read them thoroughly. Gave them feed-back. And so, that was a lot of time. But to me, that was important. Okay. So, that was a high priority to me.

It is quotes like this that hint to the complication of further untangling the more truly complex layers of temporal agency and boundaries than have been discussed here. While she talks about teaching as a rewarding profession and implies a strong sense of choice in designating it a high priority in her life, she also, with the added perspective of hindsight, recognizes an extended, even unnecessary degree of pressure in this primacy. When asked about the emphasis in the previous quote about her *thinking* it necessary to grade papers through the weekend she responded: “Yeah. I’d say, that I probably did put more pressure than was necessary, at times, to do things that I wanted to, as far as what I considered that should be done, from the instructor. I didn’t give myself much slack. Not very much at all. And I, I probably could have (*laughs*). I’m sure I could have.”

It is comments like this last one which shift the pendulum back to the site of temporal sacrifice: that which ultimately aligns her experience with the other two women, and most directly separates them from the men. As, even though she articulates never resenting her busied scheduled, the translation of her busied feelings into temporal experience nonetheless finds her work as a teacher having taken precedence over her activities on a weekly and daily basis. By not setting up daily or weekly temporal boundaries around her work or allowing herself to be personally finished even with tasks left undone, she instead eclipsed other, more personal ways to spend her time.

In contrast, and affirmation, although she never felt she had enough time while a teacher, she does express finding herself with the sense of having enough time at the time of the interview, about a year after her diagnosis. She equates this experience of “having enough time” to an allowance of enjoying things she had not felt she had time for while teaching; Activities like watching movies with her husband, reading mystery novels, listening to music, and picking back up with the piano (after a 40+ year break) are things she says she rarely, if ever engaged in for the majority of her adult life, while a teacher.⁶⁴ Further, she reports the sense of more time as opening up to her the possibility of discovering new enjoyments, like cooking, and she reiterates, several times, the increased value she has been able attached to spending time with family and friends – from meeting former colleagues for lunch, to spending more time with her daughter locally, to watching movies with her husband. Unlike the constant and demanding nature of her relationship with time while teaching, she has come to exude a greater sense of discretion or agency.

Thus, these pre and post experiences of temporal agency present two very different, distinct relationships with time. Like the other two women, she provides an example of having improved, or lessened her busy feelings over time. Yet, while the others have made their changes slowly and over time, she is the only to have had such changes imposed upon her, instead of the other way around. It is from within this unique angle that a new, significant facet comes to light.

⁶⁴ She did get the chance to enjoy some of these activities, like personal reading, over summer breaks.

The sharp contrast lends an intensified curiosity to the period of change in between, as that bridging the gap between these contexts. She relays this period's transition as governed by the interplay between choice and adjustment in sharing, "I think part of it was, not a conscious choice on my part. But it was the fact that I, really, I go back to the word energy. Because I truly, had no energy," and emphasizing, "It wasn't that I was trying to be that way. That, that's just what happened. And so, because of that, I then learned to adjust to it. And then, make the best of it." Her characterization of this experience as one of lacking choice was prominent in her descriptions of this transition period. In another quote she aligns the characterizations of its swiftness and her lack of agency:

It was never anything different until, until all of the sudden I have a diagnosis. It was just, out of the blue. So, that was it. Ya know. So, I wasn't, I wasn't prepared for this. I wasn't slowing down. *(laughs)*. It was just, one day, I was, like I was, and then the next day, the diagnosis that changed everything. You know. So, I felt, I didn't have any choice about that. I mean, I was suddenly in a whole different world, of, of what I would do with time.

Thus, in addition to its insight as a time of change and loss, this adjustment period additionally offers a particularly unique perspective from which to consider the issue of temporal agency. Whereas every example so far has represented a fairly direct relationship between agency and boundaries - - with the men tending to exhibit both and the women tending to lack both - - the adjustment period of the Retired Teacher portrays this relationship inversely. Hers is the only case which clearly associated temporal boundaries with a lack of agency. Specifically, in this situation, making time for oneself to rest or relax was the external pressure (instead of the perpetual to-do lists and endlessly possible work responsibilities).

In comparison with her time as a teacher, during which she would never even contemplate taking a nap, through no choice of her own she had to adjust to giving such restful activities a priority. Yet, where sense of lacking temporal control usually means frustration (for the Young Professor and the Restless Creator, for example), here it operates differently. Where in others, it acts to overwhelm, here, it ultimately allows a type of freedom. In providing her with no choice in the matter, her sense of

powerlessness sheds some light onto why having a choice meant *not* choosing to spend such time for herself. The lack of control imposing her “rest time” called forth the guilt she would normally feel in choosing such activity. She elaborates:

The hardest thing was just feeling, feeling guilty about it (*laughs*). Cause I’d always been so, so busy, (*laughing*), with, with my work and all that, that . Uh, and as you were talking about perception of what I need, needed to do, or wanted to do- Because, I really did *love* what I did. I did. So, this was never, this was never something that, that, I resented. I mean, I did because I love it. And I wanted to be better and better. So. It was that kind of thing. But, no, I mean there’s so much more of that now. And I do take time out to read, and, you know, enjoy things. And, you know, sit down at night and, watch movies with my husband . And, hey, I enjoy it. I’m not gradin papers! It’s very different . . .

I’d say this is the good side of having something like a health issue, is that, yes, I think I’m - I don’t feel guilty about doing some things. Just, like I said, reading, listening to music, watching movies and all. Um, it makes, certainly makes more effort to see some of my friends, and all, whereas last year, it was very busy, but I really, try to do that more. I think just a general being slowed-down. It’s just, I’ve just slowed down and, and appreciate things a little bit more. Mm-hm.

In conjuring this theme of guilt, her lead suggests its implications in the temporal orientation of the other female professors as well. Although the implication holds significance to the realm of temporal boundaries, and lack thereof, as well as agency, its emergence here will be picked up in what seems the more appropriate section on the relationship between time and (mental) health.

Thus in conclusion to the current comparison, while the men expressed relatively little problem in maintaining temporal boundaries around work, every women voiced struggle in this area. Although the Forever Explorer shares sometimes finding himself needing to do work at home, and the Department Head says he will sometimes check his e-mail from home, the men generally find success in using the spatial parameters of their offices to enforce temporal boundaries with their work. None of the women, on the other hand, mention the effort towards creating such temporal-spatial boundaries. In fact, the Young Professor and the Retired Teacher actually speak of frequently working at home as standard practice.

While the women do mention temporal boundaries, they each only do so in the context of a struggle. Even though the Young Professor gives lip service to the benefit of drawing temporal boundaries

around her weekend in order to reserve time outside of work, she admits that she is rarely successful. Although the Restless Creator and the Retired Teacher have developed healthier habits in this regard, they respectively admit doing so as a matter of maturity and context. For the former her maintenance of such boundaries is still a weekly and sometimes daily struggle, and for the latter, her relatively drastic shift in perception occurred alongside an initially complete absence of choice in behavior.

Perhaps most tellingly, while the men did make mention of activities they had less room for in their schedules over the course of time given their transition to their role as professor, none of them mentioned the sacrifice of self-care. While the New Professor shared feeling as though he had less time to spend playing video games since becoming a professor, and the Department Head reminisced about the road-trips he was more easily able to take before taking on his current position, the men never expressed sacrifices to their sleeping, eating, or exercising. In contrast, all of the women mentioned some combination of these sacrifices. From the worst case of the Young Professor who overworks and deprives herself of sleep to the point of literal exhaustion, to the Restless Creator whose tendency towards overachievement and perfectionism led to her once weekly “temporal breakdowns,” even to the Retired Professor who would never allow herself to take a nap, all of the women shared experiences of their lack of boundaries eating into some aspect of their personal care.

These examples additionally and relatedly illuminate the distinction in feelings of agency between the groups as well. Through the creation and maintenance of temporal boundaries throughout their week, the men generally exercise and convey a sense of control over their time. In their own degrees of self-sacrifice and temporal anxiety, the women exhibit the other end of the spectrum. The Department Head particularly articulates his ultimate control over work in often finding himself making the decision that he is done with work for the day, even if he has not finished all the work there is for him to do. In comparison, even though the Retired Teacher reflects upon her realization as a teacher that her work would never feel done, she nonetheless felt the unrealistic drive towards getting as close as possible ruling out more personally-oriented activities like naps or even meal preparation. The Forever Explorer

reports actively reserving time for spontaneity in part due to wanting to avoid the scenario he sees in co-workers who become so “consumed by their jobs” that they “don’t have health.” While the Young Professor expresses the same desire to avoid that scenario, her reports of the failed attempts to reserve time beyond work cast her distance from the that burn-out scenario as not truly that far. Where the New Professor allows his wife’s prompting to enforce his separation from work, the Restless Creator is just learning to utilize her partner’s reflections as a tool to help her towards that path. Though in varying degrees, each case follows the gendered patterns in which the men express an active sense of control over their time, and the women present themselves as within a temporal struggle.

The Students

Of the entire group of participants, the themes of agency and boundaries were less blatant with the students interviewed. Compared with the professors, most of the students expressed relatively relaxed temporal temperaments. To begin the consideration for this group, in returning to that initial question of having enough time, the second affirmative answer (in addition to that given by the Forever Explorer) was provided by the third male student interviewed. He responded, “Usually I do, cause I’m a stickler about getting things done. And if not - I do have tendencies to, uh, procrastinate. I always meet the deadlines on things, but, I’ll probably stuff it full of, you know, non-sense time, and like, killing time, putting it off. But, I’ll, I’ll always get it done. So, I would say on the whole, yes.”

As a brief introduction to this student called the Non-Tourist, he is so named in offering travel as the primary activity he would choose in the scenario of full discretion over his time. He describes his approach to travel as an opportunity to explore a new place, but distancing himself from the standard tourist, he specifies the preference of doing so in an unplanned, unscheduled way. Instead he prefers nothing of an itinerary beyond a city and a hotel, and upon arrival, begins his adventure upon exiting the hotel doors. Interestingly, this back-drop scenario to his namesake is quite similar to that of the Forever

Explorer at the edge of the woods. As the only other respondent to answer positively to the sense of having enough time, this similarity suggests more than superficial relevance.

Besides its rarity, his affirmative response to the question of having enough time is a further curiosity given that he is one of the busier students of the group. In addition to his role as a full-time student, he also reported involvement in several clubs in a variety of capacities, from member to co-founder. At the time of the interview he relayed having recently found himself unable to keep up with the obligations of these role and making the decision to drop out of one of his clubs. He explains the decision in saying, "You know, whenever I give my time to somebody, I wanna be able to keep my word. Whenever I can't keep my word I feel like I let that person down . . . Uh, but it was also, it was a great relief to say, okay, I put that away. And I did it, I did it amicably."

Thus, despite his busyness, it seems that his ultimate sense of temporal agency finds expression in the initiation of such adjustments. Where the Restless Creator acknowledges her 36 hour dilemma as a matter of an unrealistic to-do list rather than a shortage of time, the Non-Tourist takes this knowledge and puts it into action by accordingly cutting back. While he does not directly address the notion of temporal boundaries, they are implied to the extent of his actively putting realistic parameters around his obligations. Thus, the Non-Tourist seems to represent another example of the direct relation between boundaries and agency, and even supports the gendered patterns of the professors.

As another unique case to the issues of boundaries and agency, and also one not yet introduced, the Morning Owl also deserves mention here. Her name actually comes from the relatively strange temporal boundaries, or schedule that she keeps, as she reports usually going to sleep in the morning when the sun is rising, and sleeping until the afternoon. The pattern in itself implies some degree of agency stemming from the relative flexibility of the schedule which would allow her to choose such daily and weekly patterns. Yet, a further layer of interest resides in her background as a child of a parent in the military, her mom, and the resulting frequent moves that she experienced throughout childhood. She relays the frequency resulting in a sense of uprooted-ness for her and she romanticizes the alter-scenario

of settling down in one place. Particularly, in sharing the scenario in which she had to live with family friends as her mother went to Iraq, her description of this experience is heavily underscored with a sense of lacking control. The frequent rate of moving and sense of lacking roots draw a parallel to that much earlier considered notion of short-term experiences of time. Although a bit of a long-shot, perhaps her maintenance of such an odd schedule is a means to assert that control over time that she felt so absent to her throughout her childhood.

For the student group as a whole, one particular pattern emerged to distinguish this group from the professors. While the issue of boundaries was prominent with the professors in terms of those present or absent around time spent working, the predominant boundary for the students was that preserving and even routinizing social interaction. Every student emphasized maintaining some boundary in their weekly schedule as a means to structure into their lives time spent with others.

Sunday is the temporal boundary emphasized by the Contradictory Learner. It is the time of week, every week, that she keeps reserved for spending with her boyfriend and a group of friends. She says, "Sundays are when, ya know, they are definitely days off for me. And, they're usually days off for all of my friends. And so that's like kinda the day. I mean, I guess one thing that's completely structured for us is that we always go get Mexican food on Sunday." Often following a Saturday night of hanging out with one another, often at a bar, and often into the early hours of Sunday morning, going to get Mexican food is a staple of this social time on Sundays, although they are largely laid-back unscheduled and unscheduled days.

For the Young Mother, the preservation of her weekends away from the role of parent finds the importance of this boundary. As much as she expresses appreciation for "my time" as means to enjoy solitude, she equally emphasizes the importance of spending time with two close female friends. She says that when she does not see them in person, they at least talk on the phone every day, but that it is the weekends when they tend to spend time together. While they often just "hang out" and socialize, they

do sometimes “go out” on a Saturday night. The Young Mother emphasizes this reservation of time spent with friends as highly important to her ability to de-stress, unwind, and get ready for another week.

Although the other students tended to be less detailed in the construction of similarly based boundaries, nearly all of them expressed maintaining weekly boundaries, or schedules, around time spent socially. For the Sociologist in Waiting, Thursday nights represent the designated meeting time for the billiards team she coaches. While she first observed, and then for awhile played with the team, she had recently taken on the role of coach for the team. The Returning Student shares that strong anchors in his weekly schedule are the several AA meetings he regularly attends. In addition to the meetings, other time is often set aside throughout his week to meet with or at least talk to those members he is sponsoring. For the Non-Tourist and the Morning Owl (to be introduced shortly), the time they spend with others is scheduled in the weekly meetings of clubs of which they are a part. The former emphasizes the social aspect of these gatherings in highlighting that most meetings lead to “going out” with club members afterwards. The latter particularly mentions the appeal of the athletics teams she is involved in due to the social scenarios and interaction they provide. Thus, the most prominent kind, six of eight students express the structuring and adherence to boundaries based on social engagements and interactions.

This distinction based upon boundaries, with the professors expressing those around work, and the students expressing those around social activity, seems logical as based upon the general differences in life stage and role. It makes sense that the professors would largely anchor their temporal boundaries around work, as a primary anchor of their daily and weekly routines, just as it does for the relatively more care-free students to more commonly yield greater priority to (and ability to engage in) socialization with friends.

However, in more general terms regarding social boundaries, it is worth mentioning that for several cases of the professors, their expression of work boundaries does actually imply the sectioning off of work in order to reserve time for social interaction. Specifically, those professors most explicit about drawing boundaries around work – the Forever Explorer, the Department Head, and the New Professor –

all have family at home (all have spouses at home, and the first also has children). That factor suggests a pattern where boundaries set to reserve more generalized social interaction evolve perhaps evolve into set to reserve time for the family unit.

Returning to that question of having enough time, the particularly emphatic response by three students at the other end of that spectrum warrants attention to the issue of lacking agency. With this short list comprising: the Young Mother, the Returning Student, and the Graduate Student, the rationale behind their responses reflects in the roles after which they are named. These three cases represent exceptions to the more general rule of students. As the only parent, the only student over 30 years of age, and the only graduate student, these more “adult” factors seemed to lead towards their comparatively limited senses of temporal agency.

As discussed for the Young Mother, the constancy and immediacy of parenthood expectedly places a great limit on the degree of discretion she feels over her time. As considered more fully in an earlier section, the emphasized value she places upon “my time” comes from the fact that her role as a mother to an infant child often leaves her with feeling little discretion over the details of her days.

For the Returning Student, his responsibilities and sense of agency are a little less straightforward. As a returning student, and as the oldest of the student group, he lends an extra degree of seriousness to his responsibilities, and admittedly much more than his initial attempt about 17 years earlier. However, even despite his overwhelming sense of busyness at times, he nonetheless champions the sense of choice in his choosing to leave the corporate world he had found himself in to pursue an education in music, and ultimately, a career in it as well. Further, perhaps an interesting relation to the previously mentioned emphasis on social boundaries for the students, he bolsters his sense of choice and buffers his sense of busyness in perceiving a sense of connection with others:

The biggest thing that helps me, is, because we're in- it's, it's a social combination that we have. I'm not alone. So . even if I don't know any of these people around here. They're all stressed out. And nobody's getting any sleep . . . Now that I know we're all doing this, and our life sucks for the next five years. I can accept this as my life and be happy with it. Um, because, you are miserable,

so therefore, I can miserable with you. So therefore, now together, we're not miserable. (*laughs heartily*). Power in numbers.

In a similar pattern, the Graduate Student also expresses busyness but agency as well. As a graduate student his workload differs from the other undergraduate students, with the Returning Student representing the closest parallel. He specifically mentions the difficulty of putting boundaries around his work, suggesting the significance of his work as a component of his identity:

And, what I mean is that - it's probably true for you, to some extent - but what you're doing, you're always sort of practicing what you're studying. And so, you're sort of living it. And it's this similar thing that I've heard people say about art. Like, there's no separation between yourself and art . . . I don't even know what to call it - It's not interest, it's not that. But it's like, it's almost meta-physical. It's like, this is my reality.

In this way he sounds similar to the Retired Teacher in sharing the layers of personal identification with his work. Like her opting towards teaching to an ideal as a standard she recognizes will take extra time, he implies a degree of acceptance for his busyness as a part of his reality and identity. He does though, still assert his need for balance, or for intermittent breaks in commenting "Really, I enjoy work. I enjoy it. It's just that sometimes, there's no break from it." Yet, even without explicit boundaries placed around the time he spends doing work, he reports meeting this need as a type of automatic response:

And if I just feel completely burned out by what I'm doing . uh . in some ways it's sort of an automatic response, like, I cannot do this right now. So, it's almost physiological, I don't know, it's hard to say. But, um . something just tells me, like . (*laughs*) nope, take a break. Yeah.

In conclusion to the section on boundaries and agency, these themes were less prominent with the students than they were with the professors. Generally, the students on the whole had a more relaxed approach to time than the professors, seeming to directly yield less attention to the issue of agency. As a group they were less likely to designate boundaries around time. Yet when they did, they were most likely to set temporal boundaries around social activities involving friends. Where a few cases demonstrated feelings of busyness akin to that expressed by the professors, these were outlying cases to

the group of students. Yet, even these busiest students tended towards feelings of relative control as in comparison with some of the professors.

Overall, professors were much more likely to discuss the creation and maintenance of temporal boundaries than students. The boundaries discussed by professors were most likely to be drawn around work, as a means to contain it and preserve that beyond. The theme of agency was also greater within the interviews with professors, and often relatedly so. For this group, it was a theme often connected to the boundaries of the work/not-work divide, with sense of agency correlated with the maintenance of that division and sense of lack with its absence. Within this overlap, a strong division further emerged between the responses of the men and the women. The division of gender seemed most influential over the temporal experiences of these professors, with the men tending to express the maintenance of temporal boundaries and feelings of temporal agency, and the women tending towards the lack of both. Additionally, the degree of fit with these caricatures seemed further pronounced for the women in correlation with age (with the younger the age, the truer the characterization).

Health

Using an extremely general division, the experience of respondents' relationship between time and health usually falls into one of two types. A simplified synopsis of these characteristics can be thought of as the distinction of the relationship between time and health as either cooperate or conflictual. Although not an entirely fair division in its black and white simplicity, this discussion on time and health nonetheless finds a meaningful structure within these basic categories. Basically, time and health are considered in cooperation where the participant approaches the former as a means towards promoting the latter. A conflictual relationship between time and health is used to describe participants' accounting of the former as an impediment to the latter. In many ways this division parallels the preceding discussion on agency and boundaries. The discussion will proceed as broken down by the

characterizations of cooperative and conflictual, with separate considerations for the groups of professors and students as relevant to each realm.

Cooperative

A cooperative relationship between time and health is considered as one in which the former lends a means towards the latter. The most blatant instances are those where participants express scheduling activities motivated by health into their daily and weekly routines. The prominent types of activities scheduled by interviewees on the basis of promoting health were physical exercise, both for physical and/or mental health, and other types of activities motivated by a sense of relaxation or stress-relief contributing to mental health.

The routine scheduling of health-promoting activities was expressed much more often with the professors than the students. Two of the male professors most directly and actively approach the promotion of health through organizing time for exercise on a daily basis. In talking about his methods of scheduling and prioritizing time, the Poetic Agent labels himself obsessive when it comes to his work-out routine, sharing that the anchor from which he usually draws the rest of his daily schedule from is “what body part I’m working out.” The Forever Explorer says he starts his day out with exercise, feeling this activity an encouraging starting point for the rest of a good day to follow. These two are in the middle of the male professor age group, both sharing the border between 40s and 50s. Where the former describes his physical health as a part of his triadic division of time (also including the intellectual and the interpersonal realms), the latter reports giving heightened importance to daily exercise after his father suffered a stroke within the past recent years.

In addition to time specifically devoted to physical exercise for the stated purpose of physical health, the mention of scheduled activities motivated by reasons of mental health was additionally popular. Again asserting their similarities, the Poetic Agent and Forever Explorer both additionally specify

time spent in nature as particularly relaxing and rejuvenating. The former mentions planning cabin stays once to several times a year, particularly during those “sacred times” of the Jewish calendar. The latter says he often schedules hiking and backpacking trips with his sons throughout the year, and also mentions taking family vacations at cabin locales. Beyond these two examples, the oldest male professor and the two oldest female professors also recount daily or weekly reoccurring physical activities under the umbrella of mental health, specifically as means for relaxation and/or stress relief.

Although he does not describe the activity as a form of exercise, the Department Head reports taking daily walks in the mornings or evenings (and sometimes both), sharing that he finds this activity something that helps to ‘clear his mind.’ For the Retired Teacher, integrating time for health, particularly in the form of relaxation and rest, became a daily priority after her diagnosis. Her lack of control over the need for rest and relaxation to become part of her daily routine played the greatest role in her personal acceptance of the adjustment from the busyness of teaching to the slower pace of retirement.

The Restless Creator maintains a weekly commitment to attend a yoga class at least once every week on Tuesdays, and often a second time on Fridays as well. She reports the class as invaluable to her relaxation. Helping her to manage feelings of stress and anxiety, sometimes depression, she describes yoga as the quintessential activity towards achieving that state she refers to as “mindfulness.” For what seems like similar reasons, she also maintains a re-occurring weekly activity to walk through the mall while between classes on Friday evenings. She shares, “I will go to University Mall and I will stroll around. I will get a cup of coffee, and I will stroll around, and then I will go to yoga. And I love that. And if I don’t get to go to University Mall on Fridays, somethin’s bad. Yeah. That- I love to do that. I know that’s, so crazy. I don’t really buy anything, I just wander around the mall.” Additionally, while not necessarily scheduled it into specific time slots, she generally uses the amount of time she has spent with doing fun and creative things like card-making to gauge her well being. She reports that “within a month, if I

haven't spent two or three afternoons a months, like sittin down, makin the cards, then somethin's wrong. And then I feel it. And it's like, okay, we haven't had that, that kind of play time."⁶⁵

As a quick summary of the role of time towards the promotion of health in the case of the professors: two male professors specify the prioritization of physical exercise for purpose of physical health on a daily basis. In also including routine activities for the purpose of relaxation and stress-relief, that pool grows to include nearly all (3 of 4) male professors, and most female professors (2 of 3). Worthy of mention, the one male and one female professor not in these categories are the youngest male and the youngest female. The New Professor made no relevant mentions and the Young Professor finds the relationship between her time and health as one chiefly in conflict.

In comparison, some of the students did make mention of involvement in physical activities, but none explicitly expressed routinely scheduling it for reasons of health. As example, both the Graduate Student and the Contradictive Learner mentioned running as an activity they engage in, yet, neither schedules the activity of running. While exercise and athletics were actually mentioned as weekly activities by two female students, the motivations were not specified as per reasons of health. The Morning Owl reported exercising daily at the on-campus rec. center at the time of interview, but says she goes as a matter of being bored and having 'nothing else to do' over the summer months with a light course load, her friends mostly out of town, and no car for transportation. The Sociologist in Waiting mentions having started a routine of going to the gym on campus to work out, but only in 'preparation for the summer months' and 'bathing suit season.' While the Morning Owl and the Sociologist in Waiting also both expressed involvement in sports teams as types of scheduled, reoccurring events concerning physical activity, the aspect of health was not recognized as motivation for involvement.

Thus, none of the students fit the designation of a cooperative time-health relationship on the basis of scheduling physical activity for health. However, though the facet of mental health is less quantifiable and thus stickier to approach, that theme seems more a concern for the students than the

⁶⁵ She is the second to use the term "play time," as in addition to the Forever Explorer whose use of the term is discussed in the earlier segment on the vocabulary of time.

physical realm. The Young Mother, for example, implies in her description of “my time” its necessity to her mental health in insisting that she would “go crazy” without it. The parameters of her schedule find this opportunity a reoccurring part of her weekly schedule, at least on the weekends when her daughter’s father takes over the role of primary guardian.

For the Graduate Student, as much as he reports enjoying his work, he equally asserts his need for intermittent breaks. Although he does not necessarily plan or schedule such time in advance, he reports knowing when it is needed as the result of the “automatic response” of his body and brain shutting down as signal. (It is interesting to note, the difference in his description of automatic response as a savior of sorts, in comparison to that auto-pilot described by the Restless Creator as the state which can create the need for rescue.) In terms of managing feelings of stress and busyness, the Non-Tourist also offers his recent example of actively cutting back on his responsibilities by choosing to discontinue membership in the one of the clubs within which he had been involved.

Additionally, those relationships as considered within the notions of temporal boundaries and agency also imply less physical aspects of the interplay between time and health. Those professors who expressed a sense of agency (and relatedly maintained temporal boundaries) also implied a sense of health, perhaps most starkly seen as in comparison with the stress and anxiety of those lacking it. It could additionally be argued that the boundaries drawn by the students around social activities are health-promoting as well in terms of social support and building friendships.

Conflictual

A conflictual relationship between time and health is used to describe participant references to time as an impediment to health. Most prominently, this theme concerns symptoms of ill-health due to the feeling of not having enough time. Feelings of time-scarcity, time-poverty, or some variant sentiment leading to or encouraging poor health are considered here in two ways. First, general feelings of stress as caused by the feeling of not having enough time, or a sense of powerlessness over time, is viewed a

consequential symptom for both physical and mental well-being. Second, the inter-related sacrifice of specific habits and activities recognized/desired as healthy is also considered.

As the case for its cooperative relationship, the conflictual relationship between time and health was also a more prominent theme for the professors. Paralleled and intertwined with the issues of agency and boundaries, the female professors exhibit the most clearly express conflictual relationships between health and time. The epitome of time-stress, the Young Professor offers the worst case. Despite her personal gauge of improvement since her years as an undergraduate “living on Mountain Dew,” she is still the only to express over-working herself to the point of literal exhaustion. Her tendencies towards over-work and personal sacrifice take their toll in reaching the state at which she finds herself so physically fatigued and sleep-deprived that she will have to nearly sleep through an entire weekend. She articulates:

Cause the problem is, if I don't sleep for a few days, I will just crash. And so, this past weekend, I slept like 12 hours a day. And it was like, I can't get myself to the point where I just have to crash and I just- I had no choice but to sleep for 12 hours in a day, so . That, that's not healthy. But, usually that's what it is, and when I'm just so exhausted, I just have to crash. That's usually a sign of, I've got to be better about this.

Although she realizes, “I've got to be better about his,” expresses a fear of “burn-out,” and emphasizes the motivation of watching her brother suffer from an aneurism in the recent years, she nonetheless continues to struggle with implementing healthy boundaries around her work. While she primarily talks about sacrificing sleep, she additionally mentions a deteriorating diet and an increasingly sedentary lifestyle, with less time available for cooking and exercise given her feelings of busyness.

As age and maturity seem to provide a pattern of improving the temporal anxiety of the women, the Restless Creator expresses similar angst, but relays greater success in improvement over the years. It sounds like she was more like the Young Professor when she was at her age, as this was the time during which she was making her routinely hysterical phone calls to her dad who illuminated as her problem as the 36 hours she was repeatedly trying to cram into every day. As just previously considered, she does

exhibit the development and adherence to health-promoting routines like yoga. As she suggests, her improvement is likely a function of her age, experience, and maturity. She additionally mentions loosening her own expectations of perfectionism in terms of things like being okay with not getting papers graded within the deadline originally promised.

However, although she may have an improved relationship with time as compared with her former self, and as in comparison with the Young Professor, she nonetheless exhibits continued temporal anxiety in the reoccurring theme of desire for greater control. An earlier shared quote provides a quite recent example:

So, even, even with teaching, my initial impulse, coming back from this Spring Break, today, was just like Oh My God, Oh My God, on-your-mark-get-set, we have to go so fast, we have so many things to do. And, I thought, No, I'm the one in charge here. We can just- This is what we need to do. How do we want to handle it? . . . And, sorta just, changed my relationship to that. And say, we all feel like there's not enough time. But that doesn't help us get things done necessarily. So, I kinda said, just, how can we do this? Let's look ahead, let's look back, ya know. And, cause I think in the past, I sort of did this, 'Race to the finish line(!)' And, I thought, Well, just stay focused on the finish line, but we don't have to race.

She shares her tendency to want to “race to the finish line,” and the counter efforts to slow this response down, relaying that her shift in temporal perception is more a work in progress. She can still find herself in the midst of a struggle to negotiate new responses from the more historical, more ingrained patterns of temporal pressure.

For the Retired Professor, although the dominant characterization of her relationship between time and health at the time of the interview was one of cooperation, the hints of conflict in her life pre-diagnosis warrant attention. Particularly, the unique context of her temporal transitioning calls attention to an insidious, possibly crucial component in the dynamic of time-stress. As briefly mentioned earlier, her lack of control in transitioning to making rest a priority underscored the guilt she would normally feel in choosing to take such time for herself. In making the transition, she reported that “the hardest thing was just feeling, feeling guilty about it (*laughs*). Cause I'd always been so, so busy, (*laughing*), with, with my work and all that.” Ultimately, she is actually able to find appreciation for the sense of powerlessness

which came along with her diagnosis due to its very ability to render her guilt futile. She reflects, “I’d say this is the good side of having something like a health issue, is that, yes, I think I’m - I don’t feel guilty about doing some things. Just, like I said, reading, listening to music, watching movies and all . . . It’s just, I’ve just slowed down and, and appreciate things a little bit more.” Thus, in taking away her power of choice, her illness actually ended up allowing her to “slow down” and appreciate her time more. In taking away her control, what her illness actually accomplished was erasing the impeding middle-man of guilt.

In surfacing so directly in this scenario, this illumination called forth the link between guilt and time-stress in other cases, at least particularly with the women who express facing the conflict of time-stress. In highlighting her own mechanisms of guilt, the Retired Professor’s description calls attention to its paralleled influence within these other narratives.

The Young Professor implies the relevancy to her in her expressions of perfectionism. At one point, in discussing the issue of meeting deadlines, she reports feeling like a slacker when she is unable to meet them on time and hones in on the desire to not have others see her as such. She shares that the possible scenario of not meeting a deadline is an exemplary one for her perfectionist drive to kick in, urging her tendencies towards overwork, particularly lending the motivation for her to push herself beyond her limits. Although she does not use the word itself, guilt seems an appropriate sum of the factors at work in her inclination to overwork.

As she illuminates in this example, an ultimate fear driving her perfectionism seems the perception of others viewing her as a slacker. While, as a contrasting example, the Department Head displays the ability to feel okay with leaving things left undone, the Young Professor seems unable to separate incompleteness, or even imperfection from a sense of personal indictment. Her guilt-laden desire to avoid negative feelings about her work, even unrealistically so, seems to be a primary motivator in her often unrealistic drives towards perfection.

The temporal stresses of the Restless Creator also hint at an underlying motivator of guilt. Like the Retired Teacher and the Young Professor, she similarly expresses the perfectionistic tendencies which

could unsurprisingly reveal guilt-driven roots. The possibility finds greater likelihood from a description she offers in which she contrasts herself to her especially busied sister. Although she offers the example of her sister under the premise of it representing an unhealthy one, she nonetheless manages to insinuate a comparison in which she casts herself as less-than. As a worst case scenario she offers the example of her sister, whom she says, “doesn’t have enough time. She doesn’t spend enough time sleeping. She has two boys. And, she just works, too much, at doing all kinds of crazy things. And, I know, that when I look at [her], and think I am slug, there’s a lot of things wrong with that.”

Thus, although she describes her comparatively negative self-assessment as “wrong,” this off-the-bat comparison nonetheless suggests that it is a contrast with which she is quite familiar. The imagery of a slug holds particularly negative connotation in belittling her accomplishment and achievements, and provides supplement to perpetual drive and anxiety to “race to the finish line.” This comment implies the potential force of guilt at work in fueling her temporal-constancy against the potential of not doing as much as she feels she ought to be able.

These considerations of conflict between time and health once again draw the dividing line between the male and female professors. None of the male professors seem to imply guilt or a sense of inferiority over not doing more with their time. While the Poetic Agent perhaps comes the closest in reporting often thinking he could do more with his time, he contextualizes this expectation in a much more positive way, and as in line with his “maximalist approach” to life. The male professors, including the Poetic Agent and Forever Explorer, were instead more likely to report a conflictual relationship between time and health as exhibited by their colleagues, not as within their own lives. Thus, the female professors stand out in this category of conflicted temporality, as the group most likely to report personal sacrifices to their health, and additionally expressing the implications of guilt as wedded to these unhealthy practices.

Also running parallel to the section on boundaries and agency, students were not as likely to directly bring up issues related to the relationship between time and health. Although a few of the

students did imply the relevance of the description of conflict to the relationship of their time to their health, none were on par with the emphasis expressed by the female professors. Yet, it is still interesting to note those for whom this theme did at least find implication, the Returning Student, the Young Mother, and the Graduate Student, they represent that group of three students highlighted from the last section in their deviation from the larger group of students on the basis of their emphasized reports of busyness.

The Returning Student, for example, is the only student to report sacrificing sleep on the basis of having too much to do. However, in an interesting twist, he relays this sacrifice in a way so as to actually emphasize his control over time:

Something I started doing when I was in school, especially over the summer, summer session one, was getting like, two, three hours a sleep at night. And it was crazy . . . And we tell ourselves, ya know, er, or I tell myself that, 'oh I need six to eight hours of sleep at night, otherwise I'm going to be exhausted the next.' So, I would purposely not look at the clock, before I would go to bed, because I would set my alarm, and I wouldn't pay attention to the time. I would force myself not to process the fact that it was 2 o'clock in the morning and I have to get up at 5. And, I would, ya know, just keep up telling myself that I'm gonna wake up so restful tomorrow, I'm gonna wake up, ya know. And, it works. So, a lot of our time is forced internally. Our conflict is in processing it.

Thus, although he does present the sacrifice of his sleep to the conflict of time, he is the only to describe the sacrifice in terms of its representing an example of his control in the situation.

Somewhat similarly, although the Young Mother expresses conflict between her time and health, she also emphasizes the support system she relies on to thwart this relationship throughout related descriptions. Despite the stress of parenthood, the knowledge and anticipation of her momentary breaks on the weekends provides her with a weekly anchor of balance. Furthermore, especially with her mother living down the street from her, she repeatedly emphasizes knowing and appreciating her mother's availability to watch her daughter when needed. It may also be worth noting that, like female professors, she expresses a sense of guilt in asking her mother to take on this responsibility, if even temporarily.

As the last, somewhat related example, while the Graduate Student reports that he can at times find himself over-working towards the path of burn-out, he nonetheless finds this conclusion ultimately

averted in what he describes as an almost automatic response leading him to stop and take a break before getting to this point. To conclude the consideration of the students with a final clarification, although the Contradictive Learner does express frustration for the discrepancy between her values and her use of time, she does not emphasize either stress or the sacrifice of health in other ways as a consequence.

Thus, like the themes of agency and boundaries, the theme of health and time was more prevalently expressed by the professors than the students. Most of the professors, three of four men and two of three women, reported some type of daily or weekly routines towards health-related goals. As was the case for boundaries and agency, the male professors were most blatant in their efforts towards health-promoting routines, with two of the men scheduling physical exercise on a daily basis. In comparison, while the majority of women reported engaging in some form of healthy behaviors regularly, they all indicated present or recent difficulties in resolving their temporal stress. As the example of the Retired Teacher brings to attention, the issue of guilt suggests a possible influence across the women's experiences of time conflict.

In contrast, the students proved much less likely to directly reflect upon matters of health. Although several students expressed partaking in physical activity, none scheduled it on a routine basis as a means of improving their health. Where several professors reported time-stress impeding their sleep, exercise, and/or diet, such a sacrifice was only mentioned by one student, the Returning Student. Unlike the professors, he does not view his sacrifice of sleep as problematic, but labels the problem as his brain's insistence that he needs more than two to three hours a night. The difference in responses between the groups of professors and students suggests differences as a reflection of age and stage in life. Like the issues of boundaries and agency, health was another arena which seemed to feel less real for the students.

Technology

Technology was a component of every interview in some way. While in some it played only a mention, many expressed degrees of its influence over their perceptions of temporal experience or context. To provide a meaningful way to present the range of these mentions, their discussion will proceed along the time-line of technological advancements. Starting off that evolution is the television, the piece of technology mentioned by the greatest number of participants. The other technological themes follow in the topics of the cellphone (and texting), the computer/internet, and smart-phones (as a distinct type of hybrid of the last two).

Television

Television was mentioned by four out of the eight students and by five of the seven faculty members. However, these mentions were divided between those referring to television as a part of their daily routines and those whose comments in some way set them apart from television viewers. While the majority of mentions by students (three of the four) fell into the former category, the majority of comments by professors (three of five) fell into the latter. It is also worth noting that the fourth student, whose stance shared greater alignment with the tendency of the professors, was the only graduate student interviewed.

Half of all students commented on television – two males and two females – with the two females and one male specifying it as a reoccurring activity in their daily or weekly lives. The Young Mother specified watching television as one activity common to her “me time” spent at home alone as a form of relaxation. She expressed, in reference to both herself and her daughter, that “we watch t.v. *a lot.*” She even said of her eight-month old daughter, “she really likes Jerry Springer . . . everytime the sound comes on she’s like, ‘Jerry, Jerry.’ ”

The Morning Owl similarly emphasized watching television as a form of relaxation, but with a preference for cartoons. She reported it as an everyday activity, and expressed its importance to her in

the sentiment: “I think when you’re watching a cartoon . . . something serious isn’t going on, as opposed to real life. It just gives you a moment, to like, not have to think about that stuff. And, you can just sit, and enjoy, for thirty minutes to an hour, and just be happy . . . not thinking about all the other things that I don’t want to think about.” In speaking about her study habits, she also mentioned her aversion to studying in silence, which she finds difficult to do, reporting that she will instead often have the television playing in the background.

The Non-Tourist commented on routinely watching ‘late night t.v.,’ generally around the hours of 9 to 10 p.m. Similar to the female students expressing television as a personal form of relaxation, he reported, “I’ll usually take a break from my work to watch those.” He additionally mentioned attending the showing of the series *Lost* on the big screen at a local movie theater as an activity he looked forward to every week while it had recently been shown there.

The male Graduate Student was the only student to mention television without reference to it as a reoccurring part of a daily or weekly routine. He said that although he owns a television, he usually only uses it as a screen for viewing shows online. Thus, it is with a degree of self-separation and a tinge of curiosity that he makes the observation: “I feel like sometimes people organize their time around t.v. shows” – providing as example a friend who maintains a clear schedule during particular hours to ensure his ability to watch his favorite reality shows air on t.v. Yet, for the three of four students who mention it, television provides a form of recreation or escape.

In comparison, five out of the seven, or over 70% of the professors interviewed mentioned television. Yet, only two mention t.v. as part of a personal routine and three mention it to distinguish themselves from viewers. The former group encompasses the Restless Creator and the Department Head. In relaying her daily routines, the Restless Creator reports that upon returning home in the evenings, she usually turns on the television, pours herself a glass of wine, and calls her long-distance partner over the phone. The Department Head reported routinely watching a television show or two with his partner in the evenings around 9/10 p.m.

The three remaining mentions present degrees of distinction between the speakers and television viewers. The Retired Teacher says she enjoys watching movies with her husband and mentions recently watching a series on jazz, an example she comments being likely to do “much more than watching television.” The Young Professor similarly expressed that although she watches movies, “I am not a t.v. person.” The Forever Explorer implied a distinction, but from within a more broadly expressed sense of concern for the role of television on its viewers as a society. Recalling his emphasis on the spontaneity of play time, he expresses concern for the effects of t.v. in commenting, “*That’s one of the things I think I worry about in our culture . . . With so much structured stuff, so much stuff distracting people, like television. That there seems to be a loss of energy and time devoted to imagination and play.*”

Phone/Texting

Regarding phones and texting, an initial observation finds those tools interrupting three of the interviews. The Young Mother apologized when her cell phone rang, the Forever Explorer received a text message from his son, and the Contradictive Learner’s phone vibrated to indicate an incoming call or message. In relation to the content of the interviews, references to phones found smart-phones the predominant mention. Yet, in regarding smart-phones as a distinct device from the standard cellular phone, that discussion seems appropriate to separate.

As a means to speak with others, the relatively low number referring to the standard use of the phone only includes one student and two professors. Three professors comment on texting. The three who mention using the phone to call others all mention it as a routine part of their day, and as a personal activity. The Young Mother finds the significance of her phone in the importance of her social network. She refers through the interview to two friends whom she considers very close, expressing frequent, even daily interaction. Despite her busied feelings, she says, “If we don’t see each other, we’re always talkin to each other on the phone . . . It’s not a day that doesn’t go by that we don’t talk.” Even when they are

unable to get together physically, she emphasizes that they at least talk on the phone every day. Especially given her amplified appreciation from those momentary breaks from parenthood (“even if it’s in the bathroom”), the immediate abilities of connection through the phone seem to offer a reliable, quick, and easy method of connection.

As two professors in long distance relationships, the Restless Creator and the Young Professor both have a daily time set up to talk on the phone with their partners. The Restless Creator reports talking with her partner between 8:30 and 9:30 every evening and an additional time in the morning on the weekends. The Young Professor keeps a similarly rigid routine in regularly talking with her partner at 10 p.m. in the evenings. Beyond the temporal boundaries set externally, these temporal routines may represent the strictest, most specific to which they each convey adhering.

The Young Professor and the Restless Creator also happen to represent two of three professors who mention the use of text messaging. The Young Professor, the youngest of the professors, is the only to remark about the personal use of texting and to comment about it in a positive light. Her appreciation for it comes from its availability as a quicker alternative to a phone call. She says, “I have to schedule in people’s birthdays in my PDA so I don’t miss my friends’ birthdays, to make sure I text them or call them. Even if I can’t call, I do love text messaging. Like, I can just text you happy birthday, so it isn’t like I forgot.”

Yet, despite her appreciation of texting for personal use, she finds it can be a frustration with some of the students in her classroom. In talking about her thoughts on the generational time-orientations she relays, “Coming up in those generational changes, I’m also used to the work ethic. So, the students who are behind me, I’m not that much older than them. And literally, I’m like, you can live without your phone or text-message for ten minutes.” While she likes the quickness of texting, she separates herself from those students who she emphasizes as not much younger than her, who seem to use their phones compulsively.

For the Restless Creator and the Forever Explorer, their comments on texting are entirely in regards to use by younger generations. The former relays some ambivalence in her viewpoint, saying, “I

know, watching people text, I have to say, what in the world could be so important that you just have to- But, that's the wrong question. It's not about importance, it's about staying connected." The Forever Explorer is more decidedly critical, providing different scenarios of his real-life frustrations with texting. Although he himself reports owning an iPhone (that he receives a text on from his son during our interview!), most of his commentary criticizes over-reliance on phones and texting. As a personal example he shares, "I was having a conversation with my son last night and he whips out his phone and starts texting while I'm talking and I just, stop. I just stopped. And he's like, 'yeah?' I'm like, 'I'm not gonna talk while you do that. Put it away.'" Yet, he finds the issue one far beyond just a personal frustration. He regards it as an issue of generational change, one expressed in the conflict it provides in the classroom:

They all have their little crack-berries in their hands. I can't even get 'em to stop in class, even when I threaten 'em by smashing a cell phone on the front of my . . . I mean, it's come to a point where it's just out of control. They had a thing on NPR yesterday about, texting and driving, and how many states are passing laws against texting and driving cause teenagers, well they're saying, 'that's just what we do.' They come into classrooms and it's like, 'Put that away. Now.' . . . And it's just, the next day they have it out again. They put it away when I ask them to, but it's like . . . They're addicted to non-communication on their text-messaging.

As demonstrated here, the Forever Explorer stressed the strongest feelings about technology and time, particularly the distractability and inability to focus he sees as symptomatic of a generation technologically oversaturated. He shared that although he considers it quite rude, he does not necessarily think his son or students share the same perception. He observed that while such behavior would have been readily labeled disrespectful when he was growing up, he recognizes the contextual normalcy for younger generations.

Computer/Internet

Of the students, commentary on use of the computer and the internet was a theme for one of the four male students and three of the four female students. For the Young Mother, the changing patterns of her use parallels a greater shift in the prioritization of her time. That change came about with

the birth of her daughter. She says that now the computer is primarily a tool she uses for homework. She has her own laptop and when she needs the internet she will pack up everything, including her daughter, for a trip to use a nearby library's wireless internet. Although her computer is now used primarily as a tool for schoolwork, she says this was not always the case. For example, she says while she occasionally does use the computer for things like facebook to keep in touch with long-distance friends, she says she is not "like some people" who are "always on facebook, all the time." While she admits, "that was maybe me, a year ago, when it came out," she says, "now, it just, it really doesn't matter to me. Like, I don't know, I just feel like I have other stuff to be worried about. So, I feel like I don't have time for that now." She says she is much more likely to communicate with others – often family and her two closest friends – face to face or even over the phone.

The other three mentions concern the use of the computer and internet expanded beyond the purpose of study/work alone. For the Returning Student, the only male student discussed in this section, the computer is many things. For one, the portability of his laptop provides him with a portable work station, catering to his aversion to studying in a silent, solitary space. He says, "I can't stay in my apartment and study for long periods of time. So I'll take my laptop over to Caribou." He reports that he sets up his laptop at this local coffee shop in order to study, puts on his headphones, listens to music and gets into his schoolwork. Yet, he also has the internet open, with the at least five tabs he has his browser automatically launch, of which he specifies his e-mail, blackboard, and facebook. He both expresses appreciation and frustration for the opportunities of distraction as offered by the internet. His appreciation comes from the opportunities for momentary breaks, offered both by the vast realm of the internet as well as the social context of the coffeehouse. He relays: "So, as I'm doing stuff, I can, ya know, take a break mentally, and play Farmville or something else, ya know, something ridiculous. Or, go chat to the person at the table over there, or flirt with somebody over there, or just something like that." Yet, in another part of the interview, he also mentions the frustration of this distracting power of the internet, implying the unintended extension of momentarily intended breaks. He says, "I still kinda beat myself up

about that. I get stuck on facebook, or something ridiculous, and I'm like, I did not, need this hour to just be blown away." To make up for time 'lost' on the computer or internet, he finds himself sacrificing sleep: "So I'm like, welp, that means I'm going to stay up an extra hour. It's like a self-punishment."

The Morning Owl provides a very similar report in her use of the computer and internet. Like the Returning Student, she also expresses an aversion to studying in silence. Instead she reports that background noise actually helps her to focus. She says that having her favorite movie running in the background on her laptop is a mechanism she uses frequently: "When I know I really need to pay attention, like, if I have to study for something, I'll pull up my notes on my laptop that I have on there, whatever I've written in class, and I'll pull up i-tunes, and click on Coraline and then it'll start playin, and I'll just be like, just goin at it. And by the time the movie's over whatever I was workin on is done." Additionally similar to the Returning Student, she also highlights the ability of the internet to become a distraction. She reports particularly finding this a strong draw in the early morning hours, before she goes to sleep. When asked about what she is usually doing in these early morning hours, says "I wouldn't be doing anything, really, like, important. I would just be like, goofin off on the computer, playin Bejeweled."

The last student mention, the Contradictive Learner, is a perfect example of the Forever Explorer's technologically addicted student. Halfway through the interview, in continually returning to the topic of her time spent on the computer, she giggling relays, "I think I'm addicted to the internet." While it is frequently the activity she turns to when bored, it is one that also draws her attention even when she feels she should be doing other things. She frequently finds herself on the computer while at work, at home, and while at her boyfriend's apartment. She says, "there are some days where, like, all I do at work is sit on the computer," which on some days can mean up to eight hours in one sitting. At home with her parents she says she that after returning home in the evenings after school, she often gets on the internet after dinner time, sometimes up through going to sleep for the night. While at her boyfriend's apartment, she frequently finds herself on his computer. She says of being at her boyfriend's, "he's got a computer, and when he's doing reading, and I'm thinking about reading, I'll get on the

computer instead.” She expresses often trying to start school-related work, but reports that she is often unsuccessful: “I’m just thinking about doing it. And then I’ll get on the internet, and then, like, try to like, start something, but then get distracted, and then I can’t focus, and, then I just kinda give up.”

Thus, with work, her parents’ home, and her boyfriend’s apartment as the three locations predominant to her life, the intrusive qualities of the internet in all these spaces suggests a pervasive theme throughout her daily experience. As far as the time she spends on the computer, she specifies visiting sites like tumblr and facebook, and things like checking her e-mail. She says of these activities, “I wouldn’t say that they’re detrimental things, but they’re not . . . getting me forward in school.” This scenario is the quintessential example of the dichotomous categories she relies on in describing, and dividing, her experiences of time into the divisions between planning versus doing and miscellaneous versus important. In regards to schoolwork, she relays always finding herself completing assignments at the last minute, despite always ending up enjoying the research and writing that she does, and perpetually making what turns out to be the unsuccessful goal to start earlier “next time.” Thus, her self-proclaimed addiction to the internet seems at the heart of her temporal frustrations as manifest in the discrepancy between how she would like to and how she does spend her time. In other words, her addiction to the internet seems at the root of the contradictory characterization after which she is named.

Exhibiting the exact same numbers as for the student participants, of the professors, one male and all three females at least mention personal use of the computer or internet. The theme is strongest in the two particular cases of the Young Professor and the New Professor, the youngest professors of the group at ages 33 and 34 respectively. Of the briefer mentions, the Retired Teacher (and oldest female) had the shortest and was the only to specify the computer as a device she prefers to *not* use. Referring to herself as a “list-person” she talks about making these lists by hand, explaining: “I’m very old-fashioned, but I do everything sitting and writing. I don’t, uh, trust the computer. I think it’ll lose it.”

The Restless Creator also mentions the computer, but rather as part of her daily routine. She reports turning on the computer as one of the first things she routinely does on most days shortly after getting up and out of bed. She additionally mentions enjoying the use of facebook as well, saying:

I love facebook. Facebook has allowed me to just reconnect with people. And, even if it's just like a touch, and then that's it, it's been really good. And so. . Yeah, I mean, that's my next phase, is to figure out, okay, why do I feel connected to people I don't spend time with? There's your Ph.D. Write that one – How do people manage to feel that they're connected to people that they spend no time with?

Of the male professors, it is only for the youngest, the New Professors, that the internet is a prominent theme in the interview and/or expressed as a part of his daily life. While functional in its necessity for keeping up with his responsibilities as a professor, he primarily characterizes the internet as a distraction to him throughout his day. Both at his on-campus office and at home, he relays a compulsion to frequently check his e-mail. When using the internet, he finds further distraction, as he says the task to look up one thing can easily become an onslaught of tabs in following online tangents of interest:

If you start with something and then you read about it, then you think 'what was that thing by the way?' Then some other things, some other thing, and then you're, okay, that was interesting too! Open another window, right, opening another window, so you may have like fifteen windows and you have no idea where you started with. Anyway, that's what happened. I was preparing for this class and I was looking at, uh, one of the first chapters, global social problems, something about empire, the empire, the warfare, how we changed . . . So anyway, started with empires and ended up with the galaxy and the theories of the death of the galaxy. Here is an example of like four hours of like, just like, poof!!

In response to his own response about the internet as distracting, he reflects that perhaps he should try keeping the Internet turned off while on the computer, unless he absolutely needs it, as a means to minimize distraction. Similar to the Returning Student, he finds the vast potential of the Internet both engaging and distracting. (They are close in age, with the New Professor at 34 and the Returning Student at 35 years of age.)

Of the women, it is also the youngest professor for whom the topic is most prominent. As discussed as a matter of her inability to maintain boundaries, the Young Professor finds great frustration in the feeling of perpetual on-call as incited by e-mail correspondence. She specifically hones in on the capacity for portable e-mail as available to her through her smart-phone. Thus, while her mention of e-mail as a general frustration warrants mention in this section of the internet, a more detailed account of her experience with e-mail is considered in the following section on smart-phones. However, like some of the others, she does give her opinion of social networking, saying, "I've shied away from more social networking technology type stuff. Cause, it's too much. My facebook I didn't like, so I stopped- I mean, I still check it and read stuff, but I don't like doing it anymore." She later elaborates her feeling that, "if I'm gonna have a facebook, it's too many people in all my stuff. And it's like and everybody tells everybody else. So, when it was a smaller site, I was like, sure. But then, it just grew too large, like it almost seems like work just to maintain that." Like the Young Mother who reports finding facebook of less importance after the birth of her daughter, the Young Professor also expresses a plummet in interest.

Smart Phones

The mention of smartphones came up in five interviews total. Three of those mentions came from students, two from professors. While talking about how he schedules time, the Returning Student remarks, "my little i-cal is my existence." When asked for clarification, he explained that he was referring to the i-calendar, a program available on the i-phone. He says he uses this program to set daily/weekly deadlines and corresponding reminders (in the form of alarms) at personally chosen intervals to help him reduce his tendency towards procrastination. When asked if owning an i-phone changed his approach to scheduling time, he responded that it had not, besides making scheduling "easier" because "it's my phone, so, it's always with me." However, at a later point in the interview, when the question was posed with a slight difference, asking what method he used to schedule time before the i-phone he stated, "I

mean, I actually was one of those weird people that just remembered everything.” He elaborates remarking, “I know, it’s interesting cause it’s like, I always got by fine without it. And, now why all of the sudden do I need to. But, it’s also interesting cause it’s like, it took up brain space, to worry about that, and that fear of missing something. Whereas now, I don’t have, because it’s in my phone, so I can focus my attentions elsewhere. So, it’s like a freedom.”

Although she does not talk about it in as much detail, the Morning Owl similarly champions the use of the availability of a calendar on her phone. While she does keep a planner with the intent to keep track of deadlines and goals, she finds herself relying on her phone “cause my phone goes everywhere with me, but my planner doesn’t.” The last student mention: While the Graduate Student did not own a smart-phone, he expressed similar admiration of its scheduling functions. However, although he contemplates buying one, he wavers in making the decision to bring that technology to the realm of his everyday life. In his own words, he says “I’m sort of thinking about getting an i-phone. And I feel like, if I had a phone that I could just pull out, and it would tell me when I needed to do something, that I would use that more.” Yet, just a few sentences later he exposes an antithetical stance⁶⁶ towards such technological tools in sharing, “I don’t know, I’m sort of, uh, what’s the term – A Luddite? (laughs). Like I’m really not- I have a computer and stuff, but, like, I’m not just obsessed with electronic stuff. So I don’t always have beepers going off to tell me when to do things.”

In summary of the students and smartphones: two mention being owners and express acclaim for their scheduling capabilities, specifically the ease provided in that they often have their phone with them wherever they go. The third student also mentions admiration for the same function, yet holds some reservations about becoming too reliant on a technological tool. Shifting to the professors, two of this group made reference to smartphones: the Young Professor and the Forever Explorer.

⁶⁶ The almost contradictory stance finds contextual insight in that the second quote comes right after his relaying the “regimented schedule” of his father who is “at the mercy of his company, you know, if they make him wake up in the middle of the night.”

While the Young Professor expresses appreciation for the instantaneity available via text messaging, she does not share this stance with the evolutionary integration of the internet and the phone. As considered in depth in the section on boundaries, one of her big stressors as professor comes from the extended expectations of her availability from students, due to communication via e-mail. For her, technology creates a great challenge to enforcing boundaries around time spent working. After having e-mail access made available via phone, she realized “I felt like, work was following me everywhere, so I took it off.” She specifies disliking “the fact that people can tell when you e-mail them from a smart-phone.” What bothered her most was the feeling that when she would e-mail people from her phone that they, and especially students, would develop the expectation that because she could e-mail via phone, that she should always be able to immediately respond. It bothered her so much that she chose to disable this feature. However, despite emphasizing the frustration of it, she nonetheless expressed considering going back to using e-mail on her phone.

Despite his voicing frustration with the effects of some technological advancements, the Forever Explorer is nonetheless the second professor to report having a smartphone (specifically an i-phone). While he uses it, he is cautious about over-reliance on it, especially the scheduling functions which the students report using the most. As accordant with the significance he puts on spontaneity, he explains, “I don’t really necessarily want to be reminded all the time about what I gotta do, so . . . I also like to follow my nose, sometimes. If something comes up that’s more interesting, I want to have room for it.” In a quote spawned by his thoughts on the dangers of over-relying on a technological tool like the iphone, he runs the gamut of technological devices, highlighting the similarly enveloping potential of the t.v., the cell phone, and now the smart phone:

This is the other thing, ya know, this is a wired society. I love computers. I love toys. I love tools. I think they’re great. But they can take away, so much, of your ability to – They’re, they’re good for what they’re for. Like, I typed my, when I did an honors thesis in my bachelors degree, and when I wrote there, everything was on a typewriter. And I wouldn’t go back to that if you paid me. I love my computer, ya know. But, ya know, I don’t want to spend my whole life with it, anymore than I want to spend my whole life with this [iphone]. This thing, is a great tool. But it, it can overwhelm you. Take away . so much. And t.v.’s the same way. Ya know, I’ve seen t.v. suck

people's lives out. And, I'm not against technology, but I think people need to learn to put limits on it, ya know. You can't . you can't, you really can't multi-task, you can't drive and text, you can't sit in class and listen to me, or each other, and text. You can't do it. It's not possible. You're doing one or the other. But not both.

As the professor most specifically interested in the impact of technology, he actually brings his concerns about its over-relied upon use to his classroom. He asks students to take on a brief media fast and then write a paper sharing their experience and reactions. As insightful commentary for the general impact of technology on time, especially generationally, this extended example provides a fitting conclusion:

Their final project is to unplug from all media, for five hours. All influences. You have to spend half the time alone. And the other half you can spend with other people. But there's no texting, there's no facebook, there's no t.v., there's no radio. There's no i-pod, i-phone. None of that. Just put all technology away, all that extra stuff away. And just do a media fast. And a lot of 'em really have a hard time with it, they find themselves, like . . . Ya know, they get up in the morning and they walk over to the computer and go, 'wait, no I can't do this.' And they have to, go outside which, 'nice, great idea!' Um, they find themselves going outside so they can stay away from temptation, ya know. And, a lot of 'em struggle with it . . . It's like, if you don't take the fish out of water, they can't see the water, right. So we take them out of their water and get 'em to look at a big-picture perspective, and ask some questions about relationships and about creating meaningful relationships with people and all that sorta thing. And how the media impacts that. And a lot of 'em find that, they say at least, in the papers – you never know how far they're gonna take it, but, they often say, 'I need to do this more. I need to fully see . . . I need to change. I need to give myself some boundaries.' And things like that. Ya know. Limits. Cause they find it to be valuable. They find it to be a little difficult, but a really valuable thing to do . . .

And it's really interesting how wired they are - Cause I don't think anything of, walking outta my house, driving away, leaving, ya know, leaving it all behind and going on a hike in the woods, ya know. But . . . yeah . . . don't really need any of it. Ya know, I try to remind 'em, ya know, five- seven years ago when I asked my students in the class who had a cell phone in their hand or in their pocket, only about a third of them raised their hand. And now, a hundred percent of them raise their hand. And then, ya know, I say, ten – fifteen years ago, ten-fifteen years ago, nobody had one. I was the only one in the room that had one. Ya know (*laughing*). And, um . . . So you- People have actually existed with them (*laughing heartily*).

In conclusion, along the evolution of technology, the majority of participants mentioned the television: four students and five professors. While most students (three of four) mention the television as a part of their daily or weekly routines, most professors (three of five) mention the t.v. in distinguishing themselves as non-viewers. Three participants, one student and two professors, mentioned daily use of

the telephone to talk with others and three professors commented on texting, with most comments expressing frustration for the use of text messaging by their students in the classroom.

Use of the computer or internet was a theme for one male and three female students. They all indicate the computer and the internet as both appealing and interesting, but also potentially distracting and wasteful. A theme for one male and three female professors as well, the internet also plays an ambivalent role. Where the oldest (the Retired Professor) reports preferring to not use a computer and the second oldest (the Forever Explorer) expresses concern for the consuming potential of the cell-phone, the two youngest (the Young Professor and the New Professor) both express an ambivalence similar to that expressed by the students.

Smart-phones were mentioned in five of the interviews, by three students and two professors. All the students expressed appreciation for the scheduling capabilities, with one even defining them as a type of freedom. On the other hand, the two professors who mention them, and also own them, mostly focus on the problems that can result from over-reliance on these devices. Where the Young Professor provides the personal example of feeling that work was following her wherever she went, the Forever Explorer expresses concern for a type of technological saturation that he observes in the students in his classroom. In his observations from assigning his students to undergo a brief media fast, the difficulty they express for even just going five hours without technology is startling, if even not surprising. That many seem to come away from the assignment with a new-found appreciation for technological breaks provides a poignant commentary on the growing rarity of such experiences.

Quality Time

This final piece on quality time hones in on those notions of time around which the study was built. Although much analysis has already taken place, it has intended to create a context of consideration for more general notions of temporal experience/perception, those which in turn also supplement the focus of quality time. The crafting of this thesis, from concerns of vocabulary to

implications of subjective experience, paralleled my personal experience in approaching and trying to grasp all the pertinent data.

If for no other reason than the bulk alone, the progression of this study continued to evolve in its exploratory nature: providing many more pieces than concluding definitive connections. Admittedly a reflection of my own tendency to get lost in tangents, i believe the great wealth of pathways is also representative of the topic's ripeness. Yet, moving into this final piece and honing in on the very topic around which this study originated, i particularly wanted to focus on the narrations as provided by each participant. While bits and pieces of participants' temporal experience have presented themselves throughout, i wanted to approach this concluding section as a holistic finale of sorts. I wanted to provide a conclusion which both draws back to the intended focus, and also circles back in appreciation to the notion of narrative by granting each individual the space for their own story, as they provided it.

The Stories

This section considers each narrative individually through the lens of quality time. To tackle this effort the foremost task seemed the minimization of my bias in interpreting the participants' responses. As detailed further in the methods section, the choice to refrain from the use of temporally based phrases, including quality time, was an effort towards the minimization of bias in potentially leading a question by using value-laden terminology. However, the absence of these more tangible, linguistic signifiers at the same time also leaves more leeway to the bias of the researcher whose discretion it becomes to apply these labels. The ultimate point that i want to make here is that the desire to minimize my own bias was a priority in approaching this section.

Towards the impossible, though not wholly futile goal of objectivity, i decided to revolve this section around two particular questions in the interview protocol which most closely ask for a description of quality time, even though without using that term. These questions complement the original use of the quality time label to indicate a sense of personal satisfaction. One question asks the participant to imagine the hypothetical situation in which the responsibilities and schedules on their calendar became

erased for an indefinite amount of time and to describe how they think they would approach this open-ended time scenario.⁶⁷ The intent behind the question assumes that how a person would approach the open-ended time, as a matter of ultimate discretion/control, would convey at least one, and perhaps an idealized conceptualization of the participants' notion of quality time.

The second question of interest asks for a contrasting of experiences, between that characterized by awareness of the time versus that characterized by lack of awareness. Although a more general, undirected attempt to prompt ways of talking about time, the theme of unawareness suggested its relevance in the reoccurrence of phrases akin to "time flying by," "getting lost in the moment," or "losing track of time." In relying on that older, original conceptualization of quality time as that considered fulfilling, the open-ended and temporally unaware scenarios invite the respective descriptions of quality time, both real and idealized.

These two questions intend to ground these considerations in the notion of quality time, and also in responses appropriately comparable across participants. The responses of the students are considered first, then the professors. Each group is further divided by gender, yielding four subgroups total. The groups of professors covered nearly the same age range with men ages 34 to 63 and women ages 33 to 67. The first group considered, the four male students interviewed range in age with participants at 24, 25, 27, and 37 years of old, yielding an older cohort than the female students, representing years 20 to 21.

The Male Students

The Builder (24)

The youngest male student at 24 years old, the Builder is the only name to have not appeared before this point. As mentioned earlier in the methodology section, his is the interview whose unintelligible recording negated any transcription. Thus, the data for this interview is limited as it only includes my personal notes written after the interview. Yet, although I do not have reference to his

⁶⁷ This question was actually suggested to me in a brainstorming session of a social psych class.

specific responses to the interview questions regarding the open-ended and temporally unaware scenarios, i do have a clear idea on what I felt most embodied his conception of quality time in walking away from the interview. It is from these initial thoughts and corresponding notes that I construct this reflection.

The biggest theme for him revolved around his enjoyment of building. He described his hobby of building models of cars and aircrafts as one of his favorite personal activities. It is also a pretty constant facet of his life: Although he says he sometimes finds himself taking a break from the hobby, sometimes even up to a month or more depending on the other things in his life, he reports always coming back to it. Regarding the activity itself, he describes it in stages, with planning/deciding on a model, preparing, and constructing all distinct phases. It is the activity he offers as most likely to derail his sense of time.

Separately, but relatedly, he also brought up in the interview his fondness for fixing things. As a recent example, he provided an endeavor to fix a problem with his washer and dryer. Although he did not have previous experience, he researched how to approach the problem it was exhibiting, he gathered all the needed tools, and proceeded in his attempt to fix the issue. The steps of his approach mirrored those he outlines in the activity of building models. His attempts were successful. His resultant feelings of achievement may additionally imply some insight as to his draw towards building models. Although not delivered in the same terms, the consequential feeling of achievement for having learned something, or met a challenge is also similar to those experiences of brain exercise and deep thought as experienced by the Contradictive Learner and the Sociologist in Waiting (as considered in categories of time). Yet, in contrast, his experience with models and projects is much more physically-based, in terms of implying more physical energy than the processes of thought indicated by the other terms.

The Graduate Student (25)

The only graduate student in the group, when asked about experiences where he finds himself unaware of the passing of time, the Graduate Student responds, "I guess it's just really being engaged in

the moment. Like, I can think of classes that I've been in, where, I'm just so interested in what's being said. So, yeah, it's just really hyper-focusing on, uh, what's going on." He relates this sense of engagement to the lack of separation, at times, between himself and his work. As previously quoted in the section on boundaries, he relayed:

And, what I mean is that - it's probably true for you, to some extent - but what you're doing, you're always sort of practicing what you're studying. And so, you're sort of living it. And it's this similar thing that I've heard people say about art. Like, there's no separation between yourself and art . . . I don't even know what to call it – It's not interest, it's not that. But it's like, it's almost meta-physical. It's like, this is my reality.

As this example points out, the concept of quality time is not necessarily only applicable to that spent outside of work. While its popular use seems to confine it to this realm (the alignment of "family-time" and opposition to "work-time") the notion of losing oneself in engagement is quite possible while "at work" (in the various forms it can take). The sentiments of creative engagement with work as a source of meaningful connection are explored in works like Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's *Flow* or Sennett's *The Craftsman*.

In regards to the open-ended scenario, he offered one of the more detailed portrayals. His response seems highly linked with the experience he had shared earlier in the interview about working at a job he refers to as "WWOOFING." In reference to the organization called World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms, WWOOFING refers to the temporary positions they offer for working on a farm abroad in exchange for room and board. A seemingly significant influence, he responded to the question of indefinitely unscheduled time in sharing:

I was actually gonna say that if I had tons of free time, I would probably be working outside, doing something in that vein, or growing food. But, that's very time-consuming. And, that's actually an interesting sort of way of thinking of time. Because this work will produce something later. It's sort of a nurturing relationship kind of. You have to pay attention. So, that's probably what I would do if I had a ton of free time . . . Yeah, I would like to have a place where I could cultivate the earth, and just drink coffee, and read, and go see my friends in the evenings. That'd be pretty perfect.

In light of his responses to these questions, it seems that he finds the degree of engagement with his work as parallel to his degree of feeling rewarded and satisfied. From the real experience of getting lost in his studies, to the idealized work of farming as a means of literal, tangible production, his sense of quality finds caricature in the sense of connection. The portrait of his perfect day connects him physically to the earth, intellectually towards ideas, and socially to his friends. Although not as directly, he presents a trio similar to the Poetic Agent's triad of the intellectual, physical, and interpersonal/spiritual realms.

Beyond these two responses, it seems worth mentioning that he also pinpointed running and cooking as two enjoyable activities, explaining:

I guess what makes them less stressful, or more enjoyable, is that I, I'm making a choice. Not that I haven't chosen to be in grad school, you know. But, I'm making a conscious choice in my day to separate myself from work. And so, while I still may be thinking about it, I'm doing something else. And, I guess that's sort of what happens when I lose track of time. Like, I'll have something physical that I'm doing, but my mind is free to wander.

Here he highlights the significance of the relationship between boundaries and agency as considered in that earlier section. Following the pattern highlighted in that section, he expresses a sense of choice/agency alongside the boundaries as put up around work which also maintain that time outside of it.

As a concluding observation, it is also worth highlighting his emphasis on the physical aspects of losing oneself in one's work. Like the tangible success achieved by the Builder, the Graduate Student is drawn to farming "because this work will produce something later." Of running and cooking he points out "I'll have something physical that I'm doing, but my mind is free to wander." In a later section he even equates running to a type of meditation, suggesting a draw towards physical activity in its ability for mental relaxation. In talking about where he sees himself down the road, his ultimate dream of starting his own CSA-based farming initiative seems to encapsulate and celebrate the realms of significance he highlights in the open-ended time scenario.

The Non-Tourist (27)

The 27 year old Non-Tourist initially responds to the question of temporal unawareness in saying, “I don’t think there’s ever a time I’m not aware of the clock.” He emphasizes the importance he puts on knowing what time it is because of never wanting to arrive late to a meeting or event, a trait he said was encouraged by his experience in the military. However, he does go on to offer some examples of scenarios in which he is less concerned with time. As some examples he offers “when working on a school project or when socializing with friends.” Yet, his most poignant example again goes back to that experience for which he is named.

For the Non-Tourist, his particular brand of travel represents for him a quintessential quality time. Beyond picking out a hotel, his travels do not usually include much of any kind of prior plan, except for those occasions where the trip was initiated in order to attend a concert. Although even in these latter scenarios this usually seems to be the only additional plan. His preferred approach to a different city is to start somewhere, if even aimlessly on foot, and see where he ends up. He reports the beginning of a full day usually starting out with finding breakfast and checking out resources like local newspapers or city guides to find places or events of interest and then going from there. Although he may end up planning activities as he goes along, his general tendency is to leave all worries behind while traveling, including those involving time. In fact, his preference for solitary travel comes from his feeling that he would feel partially responsible for the experience of any companion travelers who, he recognizes, may likely not be so nonchalant about schedules and planning.

Travel not only represents a context where he finds himself without worries about time, it is additionally the activity he would choose in the scenario of open-ended time as well. Although, in this particular description, as an ideal rather than real scenario, the description does change a bit:

Well, if I had money I would travel. And, I don’t know, I suppose I would end up creating things to do. I’m not a person that likes to have a lot, a lot of free time. Like, I don’t like to have 3 months of summer, with nothing to do. . . I’d probably want to embark on things. I’d probably try to get people together to maybe go on some of these trips, you know. I’ve always wanted to travel, so if money were no object, I’d probably just spend a lot of time doing that, you know.

This idealized portrait differs from his previous descriptions in that he here mentions likely wanting to sometimes include other people on these trips.

In addition to travel, he does also mention another scenario in which he feels his time is “worth spending.” This avenue seems bound to his interest in participating in a variety of clubs and organizations. He offers a specific example of successfully organizing and holding a film screening and discussion session for one of the groups with which he is involved. He offered that he feels his time is well-spent:

Anytime I can pull something off. Like, I’ve told you about the film screening and discussion panel back in April. You know, that’s the first time I’d ever done something like that. When I can bring people together for something like that, that’s deeply fulfilling To realize I could do something like that, you know, it does something for me . . . When I can watch a plan come to fruition, you know. And have it be, basically, purely my idea. People can input and that’s fine, but, you know, if it gets wrested out of my control it feels like, you know, it doesn’t feel very good. But, if I can watch something that, you know, I conceived out of my own head and then bring it to fruition, that’s worth spending time on and that’s pretty fulfilling.

This expressed value of being able to watch something progress to fruition shares with those sentiments of the Builder and Graduate Student as farmer who share appreciation for being able to see the tangible results of their efforts. The progress he outlines in conceiving, planning, and enacting sound quite similar to those steps expressed by the Builder of the projects he approaches. Curiously, his two prime examples of travel and even organization are described by him in some antithetical ways. Where he emphasizes total lack of foresight or planning when it comes to travel, he specifies the need to feel total control of bringing a plan “to fruition.” Like the Graduate Student before him, the Non-Tourist also includes interpersonal connection and bringing people together in his ideal scenario.

The Returning Student (37)

The oldest of the male students, the Returning Student offers several examples of temporal unawareness. He applies the adage, “time flies when you’re having fun,” to the recent example of

hanging out with friends until past one in the morning, and also adds the activities of being on vacation, watching a movie or an opera, or listening to music. Yet, beyond this list, his most emphatic and detailed example is the time he spends in the studio practicing his vocals as a singer. He directly contrasts this experience as an ultimate form of engagement:

Well, it's such a passion for me. And I love doing it. And, I mean, I will practice, and two hours will have gone by, and I just don't pay attention to the time at all . . . And even in social surroundings, ya know, like, like last night, playing with friends, I'll look at my watch. I'll get bored. But then, I'll get re-invigorated with the conversation and the context. But practicing . . . doesn't do that. Sometimes I'm not into and I just don't do it. But it is such a passion for me. So when I do, when I start engaging in that – And it's such a release, because it's so physical – that it, it's . . . it's . . . it's an amazing feeling.

Like the Graduate Student, this quote demonstrates a sense of his connecting with his school-work. Both convey their work as students as an endeavor with meaning beyond the attainment of a degree. Like the former's analogous inability to separate art from life, the Returning Students' engagement with practicing similarly leads to "an amazing feeling." It is worth noting too, his emphasis on the feeling of release as "because it's so physical," adding to the pattern of the male students emphasizing a physical component to these quality time scenarios.

To the question of open-ended time, the Returning Vocalist offers the least detailed response. He says that the scenario of having no responsibilities reminds him of the feeling of vacation where all he has to worry about is deciding when and what to eat. When asked again about whether he would foresee himself utilizing such open-ended time in a particular way, he answers that in the shorter-term scenario of finding himself with an extra few hours, that he is likely to "relax at the pool" within his apartment complex.

Within this group of male students, the most pervasive theme seemed based in the emphasis of a physical aspect in these representations of quality time. In terms of their responses to the two questions zeroed in on here, this group of four could also be called the Builder, the Farmer, the Traveler, and the Vocalist, in reflection of those physical emphases. While the Builder and the Traveler both specify solitude

as relevant, the Traveler also mentions, as well as the Farmer and the Vocalist, the company of others. The Graduate Student and the Returning Student highlight their work, as students, as also emphasizing a type of quality time.

The Female Students

The Young Mother (20)

Tied with the Morning Owl as the youngest participant at 20 years old, the busied schedule of this full-time parent and student keeps her pretty firmly attuned to her responsibilities and schedules. The Young Mother reports that the only scenario where she can find herself without worry, temporally or otherwise, is “when I’m doing my me time.” She generally finds this scenario on the weekends, while her daughter’s father takes over as primary guardian, and she is able to take a break from the immediate demands (both physical and mental) of parenthood. Logical in her strong identity with the role of parent, the boundaries she is able to draw around this role are central to her balanced experience of time, and life. As elaborated earlier in considering “me time” as a category of temporal ownership, she highlights that this scenario can include a variety of restful or recharging activities such as spending time with friends, walking downtown, or even spending time at home alone. She specifically mentions going to get a manicure/pedicure as one of the few times for which, “I won’t miss everybody.” In the context of parenthood’s busyness, she even finds herself considering moments alone behind a closed bathroom door as cherished, if even brief windows of “me time.”

Using a recent example of “going out,” she elaborates on this experience as one in which she found herself unaware of time:

So, this was like. the first weekend [I had gone out], in maybe. a month and a half. So, I really had a good time. Like, I didn't think about anything. I didn't think about my daughter. I just let everything go. And I just had a really good time. Like, I really had a good time last night. And, now, I'm just like, yeah I talked to my daughter today, but. it's just like, I'm better now. Like, I'm ready for this week to start. I'm recharged.

In going on to emphasize socializing, music, and dancing as particular highlights in line with “my time,” she again here emphasizes the ability to be free of obligations or worries. A theme echoed by many participants, she aligns her neglect of time to the ability to “let everything go,” and describes it as a recharging type of experience that allows her to move from the weekend to the start of a new week.

Faced with the scenario of an indefinite amount of unscheduled time available to her own discretion, it takes her a hesitant moment to even entertain the possibility, then another to reflect upon her estimated response. After a moment of inner thought, she entertains the scenario of a week’s worth of unscheduled, time and says, “I would go crazy. I don’t even know what I would do first. I don’t even know. I would just go crazy and do everything- Just, I don’t- Probably sleep, until Friday. Yeah. And then, Saturday. I’ll probably, just, okay, well I’m ready to, ya know, go out, do somethin fun. Stuff like that. And then, Sunday, I’m ready for, another week.” Thus, despite her initial overwhelm and hesitation, she quickly and more comfortably settles into the parameters of a weekly schedule. Once finding this comfortable context, she finds herself baffled by the opportunity, concurring first that she would “go crazy and do everything” before deciding she would probably just “sleep until Friday.” Again, this response and her returning to the weekly schedule around which her life (particularly as a parent) is divided suggest the centrality of her motherhood.

Her response to both scenarios share similarities. Although the hypothetical scenario finds her with more sleep, both find her weekend occupied with “my me time” types of activities, those she describes as relaxing and recharging. A strong network of social support underlies many of these scenarios, providing company, the support of friendship, and often a respite from her always-on-call role as parent of a small child. Discussed in further detail in a previous section, her mother plays an implicated role in both accounts as the Young Mother’s prime reminder to take that “time for herself” as well as offer reliable support as a temporary guardian.

While she expresses social interaction as a valuable component of her quality time, particularly with her two close friends that she doesn’t go even for a day without talking to, she just as

enthusiastically expresses the need for solitude. While time spent with friends and family can be restful and relaxing, she clarifies a distinct type of “me time” as characterized by physical solitude. Articulating the “need to have my own space for awhile,” she stresses feeling the need to just hang out at home alone sometimes. That emphasis on spatial separation mirrors that momentary solitude sought if “even if it’s in the bathroom.” An idea discussed in boundaries, her ability to maintain, even adjust these spatial and temporal boundaries greatly aids her ability to maintain these quality time moments, allowing her to feel recharged by the start of a new week.

The Contradictive Learner (21)

The Contradictive Learner shares several examples of losing awareness of time. However, while most participants frame the experience from a mostly positive vantage point (usually as representative of engagement), she offers the most negative account of the experience.⁶⁸ For this participant, losing awareness of time is an apt descriptor of her “contradictory” experience. It is this experience, in terms of distraction that finds her stuck between her goals and her reality. As she relays, it is her seemingly chronic draw to and use of the internet (“I think I’m addicted to the internet”) which pulls her into this experience. Thus, in her description of this as a “miscellaneous” activity, which seems to bring her more frustration than benefit, this type of unawareness is not that which would be appropriately considered quality time. So, although her primary example of temporal unawareness is this negative account of distraction, it is not appropriate to this section on quality time. Therefore, the focus of her narrative here hones in on the other two experiences she offers in a more positive light.

Her first example re-conjures her notion of “brain exercise” as considered earlier in the section on temporal categories. A phrase to indicate what could also be considered the experience of learning,

⁶⁸ While the Restless Creator talks about an “auto-mode” [described further in dichotomous categories] as potentially negative in large doses, this is not her sole example, nor is it one she accounts as entirely negative. It is also worth highlighting that the other negative description of losing time, as “wasting time” comes from the New Professor who also provides this description in terms of using the internet.

her words specifically convey a depth of engagement so great so as to almost literally feel the mental energy at work. To the question of temporal awareness, she gives a particular example of losing time at a coffeeshop, where: "I'm sitting down with my book, and I start reading, I'm like, 'oh my goodness, what-where did those two hours go?'" and then concluding, "I wish I could sit here all day."

As the other example of temporal disregard, she recalls her experience of Sunday, considered earlier as a boundary, as a day kept free for spending time with friends. Outside of the loose expectation to spend the day with a particular group of friends, and at some point during the day going out to eat for Mexican food, she makes an effort to keep Sunday free of any scheduled activity. As one of those social boundaries/routines common to the student schedule, Sundays represent a day free of worry, temporal or otherwise:

I guess, it's like, a relief. Yeah. Just cause, I don't have- I don't need to do anything on Sunday. And I don't have to think about anything. Unless, ya know, there's like a really big project's coming up and is due. But, I mean, even if, I have a packed week coming up, like, nothing's too urgent. Like, Sunday is just like, relief. I don't have to think about anything, and I can just do what I want to do.

Often following a Saturday night out with her friends, this block of time encapsulates the value of socialization with her friends as much as it does freedom to "do what I want to do." Her value of freedom, however, shines even more clearly in her response to the open-ended time scenario. While she starts out her response to this question in again referencing the freedom of Sundays, she veers off into talking about wanting to plan her future around such a basis in freedom:

Probably, I mean, going back to Sundays – Similar to how Sundays are. Just, um, having the feel of freedom to do whatever I feel like doing . . . I guess this is kinda how I see, how I'm planning my future, cause I don't expect to necessarily have a career, in the next ten years. So. That's not something I wanna lock myself into. And so, I wanna, I, um, I don't know if you've heard of wwoofing, like the organic farming? Well, you get, like, there's um – W-W-O-O-F, and it stands for world-wide organic farming. Basically, you e-mail these people. They're part of this, like, collective, and you're able to go and work on, like, these organic farms. And that's just something I wanna do, is find a farm, and work on a farm for awhile. And I . wanna go hitch-hiking . even though it's kinda sketchy. But, I, I would wanna spend my time seeing thing, and doing things, and going places, I guess. And ya know, just, I don't want to be like, a hippie - I hate using that,

the word, but, like, to the layperson I guess that, that's kinda what it is. But, I mean . I would like to . . be able to see the world. *[laughing]* That's all I want to do.

She is the second to bring up the World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms initiative, or WWOOFING as it is called. She shares this desire with the Graduate Student, and her appeal to this and hitchhiking (as her two specific mentions) seem bound to their opportunity to travel and the open-ness or flexibility of these endeavors, much like those qualities important to the Non-Tourist.

When i ask for her elaboration on her attraction to these scenarios, she highlights a sense of productivity, although not perhaps in a standard form:

Well, cause, you know with hitch-hiking, even though it doesn't seem like '*a job*,' per se, it's like, I feel like it would be rewarding to be able to meet a cool person. And they, they're able to take you a significant distance. So, you feel like you've gotten some- like literally gotten some place. Just-uh things like that. Just, I mean, I'm looking forward to productivity, just not in, I guess, the conventional sense. It's not like the 9 to 5 job, and, go pick up your kids, go pick up dinner, and that sort of thing.

She here again emphasizes wanting a sense of freedom beyond the parameters of a 9 to 5 job. As a more open-ended alternative, while she recognizes it as unconventional she offers the activity of hitchhiking as one example encompassing its own unique sense of achievement and productivity. Like many of the examples of the male students, she emphasizes a theme of physical-ness and tangibility with her examples of traveling and farming. Although she does not deliver these answers as such, it is of further curiosity that these especially physical responses are quite antithetical to the way she reports actually spending much of her time currently: sitting in front of a computer screen. In the example of hitchhiking, the opportunity to "meet a cool person" further adds to the theme of socialization which characterizes her experience of Sundays.

Yet, in another interesting turn, in going on with the thoughts from the quote above, she ends up moving into a quite curious flow of direction about that contradictive experience for which she is named. Although this quote is less directly related to the notion of quality time, its implied relevance, to her sense

of quality time as well as her experience of time generally, warrants its replication here. From the above quote, she continues:

Just to have like, the fruits of what you've done. Like, that's really exciting. Like, I always regret, not starting projects or papers earlier. Cause when I do, when I do them last minute, I really get into it. I'm like, 'I really love what I'm writing right now. I didn't know some of this, like, you know, last week.' And then, you know I could have worked on it a little bit more. But, I think I've just been reinforced, cause, I mean elementary school through high school, and everyone's, 'oh you're so smart, you make all these good grades.' And so, no one really taught me how to study, per se. And, I, I guess it's gotten me this far. (*giggles*).

In describing the appeal of having the “fruits of what you’ve done,” her response to the open-ended time scenario further resembles the Graduate Student’s farming as a perceived source of connection and creation. Her shift to talking about regretting putting off her academic work until last minute might at first seem a very sharp and even abrupt tangent. Yet, a second thought reveals that her shift represents one from an ideal experience of time based on challenge and achievement, to the contrasting picture of her lacking reality, in which the opportunity for such potential remains untapped.

Within this quote it seems that she actually unravels the very paradox of her contradictory temporal experience. In following up her regret of last-minute projects with the basic conclusion that “it’s gotten me this far,” she links her minimal effort to the standards she feels expected of her. While in her descriptions of her idealized temporal scenario challenge and achievement seem prominent themes, this simple conclusion seems to sum up why she tends to get neither from her school-work. Although when she pushes herself, she might find herself interested in and even challenged by the material (through “brain exercise”), no outside encouragements towards this challenge exist.

Her achievement of A grades for minimal effort have provided minimal incentive. In fact, her ability to make excellent grades with little effort may have even developed a degree of intellectual atrophy, encouraging her appeal towards the mindless activity of surfing the internet. Her shift in topics, from the attraction of the sense of achievement to the frustration of her last-minute projects, logically

represents a contrasting picture of her desired scenario with the reality of short-comings within the lacking context in which she finds herself as a student.

The Sociologist in Waiting (21)

As the participant whose interview was partially erased on accident, specific quotes are unavailable for her responses. However, personal notes taken after conducting the interview with her suffice for review of her answers to the scenarios of temporal disregard and open-ended time. As for the scenario of losing track of time, that which comes her first is the experience of “deep thought.” As considered earlier as part of a dichotomous pair with boredom, she uses the term “deep thought” to represent the kind of thought process in which she is able to lose herself and regard for the external world. Her examples hold a sociological tinge, as she attributes the experience of deep thought as one she has found as a result of her sociology courses. Her deep thought seems akin to the experience described as “brain exercise” by the Contradictive Learner.

Also like the Contradictive Learner, she offers an additional example of losing time as that when hanging out with friends. She offers the example of Tuesday nights when she meets with a billiards team that she heads, and Thursday nights, when she often “goes out,” usually with co-workers or sometimes with her roommates. Like the Young Mother’s weekends and daily phone calls, the Contradictive Learner’s Sundays and Mexican food, she also the importance of such social interaction in scheduling such time with friends.

Once again like the Contradictive Learner, in response to the scenario of open-ended time she also finds herself providing an answer in future tense, expressing the desire for a more open-ended time experience as a more central characteristic of her life. For her, she equates this with the jobs of her sociology professors who she remarks have the “coolest job” in that they get to read and think and teach about all the concepts she finds intriguing. She expresses not wanting to have a job where she finds

herself tied to one thing, and pinpoints the example of sociology professor as one with which she would not foresee herself getting bored.

Another odd similarity between her and the Contradictive Learner is that they both refer to “hippies” in their response to the open-end time scenario. While both idealize a more generally open-ended temporality for their futures, they both interject their distinction from that term. Whereas the Contradictive Learner clarifies, “I don’t want to be like, a hippie,” i jotted down that the Sociologist in Waiting had also interjected the caveat, “not to sound like a hippie.” Thus, while they both seem to correlate their idealization of open-ended or flexible temporality to the label “hippie,” they both distinguish themselves from that label.

Though less directly tied with her experience of quality time, an additional curiosity finds the Sociologist in Waiting similar to the Contradictive Learner in that contradiction in which she finds herself similarly invigorated by new concepts and ideas, yet also reports procrastinating and putting off academic projects. Thus, like the Contradictive Learner’s “brain exercise,” the Sociologist in Waiting also implies lessened incentive towards “deep thought” as a part of her academic experience given the lessened incentive of achieving good grades for even last-minute endeavors.

The Morning Owl (20)

The Morning Owl offers a few examples of scenarios where she tends to lose track of time. First and foremost, as mentioned in the consideration of technology, she offers cartoons as a highly enjoyable experience which allowed her to lose track of everything, including time. She describes of her enjoyment of cartoons:

I mean, nothing serious ever really happens in them. Nothing that serious goes on in cartoons. I think when you’re watching a cartoon . . . something serious isn’t going on, as opposed to real life. It just gives you a moment, to like, not have to think about that stuff. And, you can just sit, and enjoy, for thirty minutes to an hour, and just be happy . . . not thinking about all the other things that I don’t want to think about.

Similar to many of the responses offered by others, the opportunity to watch cartoons provides to her a temporary escape from responsibilities and “real life.”

As another example, she offers a specific instance of spending time talking with her roommate:

There was one incident during the semester this past school year. My roommate and I were in our room. She and I were just, like, talking about things that are goin on with us, like, you know, hanging out with, um, two of our friends who are on the same floor. And then, we get back in the room, and we’re sittin down, and we’re thinking that it’s like, 8:30, 9 o’clock . . It was midnight (laughs). She had class at 8, the next day, I had class at 9. And we both had a test. And we were just- I was like, it’s not 12. And, I look at my alarm clock, and I’m like, it is 12. It can’t be 12 – Like, it could not be 12, it was just 7! She’s like, I don’t know what happened. And so, like we spent like an hour, just cramming. Cause we were really confused about how it was 12 already. It didn’t seem like 5 hours passed, but, it literally did.

With this example she mirrors the theme of socialization as reflected by all the female students. Like the Young Mother’s time with her two closest friends, the Contradictive Learner’s time with friends on Sundays, and the Sociologist in Waiting’s socialization on Tuesdays and often Thursday nights, the Morning Owl rounds out the theme with this example.

As a final example, she offers shopping for clothes with her mother. This seemingly simple activity, however, has many layers. First is in the activity of shopping for clothes. A major in Consumer, Apparel, and Retail Studies, her interest in clothes goes beyond necessity. She explains that the difficulty of finding suitable sizes and appropriately fitting clothing for her unique frame has been a prime encouragement in the development of her interest in clothing design. Additionally she expresses difficulty in finding clothing which fits her preference for the “clean look” of the 1950s. Her interest in clothing is also one that has been handed through the generations of her family, with both her grandmother and mother having an interest in designing and even making their own clothes. Thus, shopping for clothes with her mom finds added significance given her special interest in clothes, and relatedly, the passage of this interest through the generations of women in her family.

This opportunity as a bonding experience with her mom finds additional relevance. Especially given an extended separation during her high school years, when her mother was serving military duty in

Iraq, the appreciation of shopping trips with her mom offers an opportunity not always readily available. Thus, despite her general interest in clothes and shopping, going to the mall with her mom encompasses another layer of appreciation. She highlights this aspect of these trips in emphasizing the particularly playful spirit which her mom brings to such excursions, providing an example in their last shopping trip together:

There's another town, that's, far more affluent than the one I grew up in. And, the mall there is really nice. So, we're going there, not really looking for anything in particular, just, whatever we see that we love, we'll try it on, and if we really love it, we'll get it. And she decided that she was gonna speak in a German accent the entire time. I can't really do accents that well, I'm pretty much good at a Southern accent, and a British accent. Bout it. And she was like (laughing), I think you know, today, I'm gonna mess with people. And I was like, what are you thinking, and she's like, I think I'm gonna do German today. And that's really odd, cause, you know there's this little tiny black lady with a German accent, which is strange. And, she talks like that the entire time . . . And she'd be like, come on, you gotta get in it. And I'm like, I only know two accents, and she's like, it doesn't matter, just pick one. And, then they come back, and they're like, are *you* looking for anything in particular? (*British accent*) 'Yeah, I think I'll just, I think I'll keep looking, and then, you know, if I see anything, I'll be sure to let you know. But, until that, no, I'm fine.' So, it was really weird and, really funny. And yeah, we were laughin. So, that's the kind of things my mom and I do.

In response to the open-ended time scenario, she offers an additional range of idealized ways to spend her time. While she again reiterates spending time with others, and family in particular, she also expands the list of activities. She replies:

I would go home. And, you know, hang out with my mom, for awhile. See a few friends. Um, visit my god-mom and her kids, for a little bit. Probably, like, do a little traveling. Like, maybe go to New York again, or fly out to California, or, even just some city that I've never been to before, just to say that I've been there and see that. Probably more than likely, go to the mall of America (*somewhat laughing*). That has to be done. I have to do that sometime in my life. And, then, probably just go to the beach and just chill out. That's probably how I would spend my time. And, then, you know, between then I would learn how to different things. Like, learn how to make soufflé. Not that I would ever need to know that. But, it'd be cool to make one.

Into this response she fits traveling, especially to see people, visiting the Mall of America and learning "different things" like how to make a soufflé. Family and the mall are reoccurring themes.

However, on an interesting note, in a follow-up question based on this response and her expressed interest in traveling, she shifts to denying having much of an interest in it. This somewhat adamant disavowal seemed particularly noteworthy given her experience as a “military child” and her childhood involving relatively frequent moves to new cities and states. She reported that where other kids would comment with envy about such a fun lifestyle of travel, she shares that she just really wanted the ability to stay in one place for awhile. In recounting the list of school she attended while growing up, she remarks that it was hard for her to make friends. Thus, while she does initially present travel as one activity she’d pursue with open-ended time, her later elaborations suggest that she perhaps longs for a more stable, long-term frame of reference, something akin to that notion as used by Sennett. Though perhaps a longer stretch, perhaps the 1950s as an era marked by the stability of the long-term finds some parallel with her idolization of that time-period, as demonstrated by her preference for the clothing style of that time.

In overview: The Young Mother expresses her temporal unawareness and hypothetical open-ended scenario as in relation to her conception of “me time,” listing activities for each scenario that she also fits within this label. In contrast to the immediacy demanded by parenthood, this young mother’s concept of quality time seems align with that of “me time” as that rare time where she feels she can give herself priority. She emphasizes this “time for myself” as including both time socializing with others as well as time by herself. For the Contradictive Learner, her sense of quality time seems to involve two main types: the relatively care-free Sundays in the company of friends, and that yielding a sense of challenge/achievement, whether intellectually (“brain exercise) or physically (hitchhiking, farming). Quite similarly, the Sociologist in Waiting also describes the scenarios of social interaction (billiards on Tuesday nights and “going out” on Thursdays) as well as intellectual challenge (“deep thought”). The Morning Owl responds with activities of watching cartoons, socializing with friends, shopping for clothes, and spending time with her mom.

One common theme throughout the group found all four at least mentioning socializing or spending time with others. They all specifically refer to time spent with friends, with three of the four even scheduling this time on a weekly basis. With the exception of the Young Mother, they all express some component of their work or responsibilities as students as within these conceptions of quality time. The Contradictive Learner has “brain exercise,” the Sociologist in Waiting has “deep thought,” and the Morning Own has her interest in clothing design.

Although the Young Mother stresses her value of education, she nonetheless does not include it as part of that picture which acts to relax and recharge her, preparing her for a predominantly busied week. Reasonably unique in her sense of priorities and responsibilities as a young mother, her case serves to highlight the significance of personal roles on perception of and experience of time. The perceived sacredness of time even as momentary particularly highlights the great impact of parenthood’s immediacy and perpetual on-call demand. While all the female students considered social interaction as part of their response to the quality time scenarios, the Young Mother was also additionally unique as the only to also specify needing time alone as well.

To consider the entire group of students, and to compare the two groups as divided by gender: where a predominant theme of quality time for the males found their responses revolving around physical activities, a predominant theme for the females involved social interaction. With three of the four males also mentioning social interaction, this marks a predominating theme for the group of students as a whole. Only two males and one female specifies time alone. While the Contradictive Learner remarks about her draw to farming and hitchhiking for their tangible/physical markers of profess, she is the only female to highlight a physical experience of quality time in such a way.

For the females, emphasis on intellectual activities (brain exercise, deep thought) was more predominant than physical activities. Thus, while physical activities outnumbered the intellectual sort for the males by four to two, its mention by most the females as well as half the males ranks it as another more commonly shared theme across the groups. Therefore, while generally speaking the males tended

to provide responses around physical activities and the females around social activities, the most common themes of the groups of students as a whole find socialization and intellectual or academic work the two themes at the top of the list. It is worth noting that the general theme of the whole group parallels the characteristics most specific to the female student group.

The Male Professors

The New Professor (34)

The New Professor offers several scenarios in which he feels unaware of time. As considered in the section on technology, the internet is the most luring context for him to find himself lost with disregard to time. However, like the Contradictive Learner and the Morning Owl, who also emphasized this tendency, he refers to it as a scenario of wasting time, casting it with a more negative than positive connotation. Thus, more along the lines of quality time, he offers other examples of temporal awareness in a more positive light. These examples include:

When I'm cooking. I like doing stuff with hands. Uh, for example, we just bought this used dresser. Which is a nice wooden dresser like made by hand in good old days, but it just needs refinishing. So that was my long term project. So, I have to sand it all by hand and clean it and refinish it, so that is probably a good two day job . . . That's another thing, uh, computer games, that is. . . . Yeah we hang out and then, my wife goes to bed, then I can go for a few hours there and, uh, playing the game. That's the best example that I can lose track of time . . . Reading a book. If I read a good book, it can. When you read you don't really think about what time it is.

In the first part of this answer, in specifying "doing stuff" with his hands, he continues with the gendered theme of all the males thus far in emphasizing physical components of their "quality-time" responses. He also goes on to mention playing computer games after his wife goes to sleep, as well as reading. Reading is a decently popular theme, with a few professors later mentioning it, as well several students who include it in their mention of academic work. However, the New Professor is the only participant to mention electronic gaming in the quality-time scenarios. Although the Morning Owl

mentions playing Bejeweled in the early morning hours as an activity in which she gets lost, the experiences are distinct, both in terms of the type of gaming as well as the meanings attached to them. The Morning Owl primarily characterizes playing Bejeweled as a distraction, and does not offer it as an activity she would choose in the open-ended scenario.

On the other hand, the New Professor says, "If I could waste a few days without any sort of repercussions, then what would I do? I would play computer games for the three days, just have a marathon . . . The next thing would be, um, watching movies . . And uh, shows." In elaboration of the reality of this response, he shares his closest experience to having that open-ended scenario:

I have experience with that too. When I was an undergraduate student, it was one of those time that you don't have responsibility as much, and then, you don't have any relationship at the time, so you just can do anything, and there was, I think, there was a break, winter break or something. It was a record. I was playing a computer game for eighteen hours . . . It was with a friend of mine, we started, I think it was about twelve at noon. And then with the short breaks to grab something to eat, and we'd play throughout the day, throughout the night, and the birds started singing and it was morning and we finally decided that eight a.m. we gotta go to bed. So there was eighteen hours of computer game playing.

However, in imagining the open-ended time scenario as expanded to an entire month, he provides a different answer:

No obligations for a month, wow. That's mind blowing. I would uh, I would write fiction . . I wrote two short stories and I have, whenever I think of an idea, I put it in a work pile, and I have like fourteen of them now, just no time for that. That's what I would do if I had the long period of time. I would love to just sit down somewhere, knowing that I had nothing, no distraction, and I would just write and write and write.

Within this response, he reflects what seems to be another common theme. Like several of the professors and a few of the students, he also describes the activity of writing as something which he finds can absorb him and momentarily erase his recognition of time. A sentiment also similarly relayed by a few professors, the New Professor further reports reaching a state where it feels as though the writing seems to almost guide itself, specifically noting that even as author he might not know what will happen to certain story lines or characters until he finds himself writing out their fate. Taking the scenario one

more step in considering an entire year of open-ended time, he says that in addition to writing a lot of fiction, that he would also want to travel, perhaps even take a trip around the world with his wife. As further detailed in the remainder of the quality time stories, travel is another emerging theme.

The Forever Explorer (48)

For the Forever Explorer, his responses to the unaware and open-ended time scenario are steeped in his emphases on “living in the now” and spontaneity. On the experience of losing awareness of time, he offers several, but emphasizes two in particular:

Those were the two examples that I thought of: when I’m out in nature. And when I’m writing. Those are my peak experiences. When I’m writing and I’m on a roll, I forget what day it is, what time it is, what’s happening around me. I don’t care. I’m in it. I’m in it . ya know . And it has taken me away. . And, it’s kinda like that hike, in a new place you’ve never been, ya know. It’s like . it’s just like that. Those are the two places were I’m absorbed. The only other thing I think of is on vacation. Where we- we go to this lake up in northwestern Montana, and it’s like, the most beautiful place on earth, and we just go and . . *Everything* is spontaneous.

The immediate examples which come to him are nature and writing. Like the New Professor, he describes writing as an activity in which he can lose himself, and time. He offers hiking as a prime example of finding himself absorbed in nature, leading to his final example of vacationing in Montana. In addition to his emphasis on the aesthetic appeal of this natural setting, it is also one which reflects his value of spontaneity as a predominant expression throughout his interview.

The open-ended time-scenario allows him to elaborate on these themes of writing, nature, and spontaneity. To the idea of this scenario he responds:

Wow. . Well, what I usually do when I have that, which is, all the things I’ve talked about. Play. Nature. Probably, most likely read. Uh, tell stories and talk with my family and friends . . Do things that are just, like . . people would think of as time-wasters, but, I like to watch clouds go by. Ya know (laughs). Things like that where you just kinda go, (*sighingly*) ‘Oh,’ and you just relax, and just, not have to worry about. But, of course, I’d also do all the exercise and active stuff that I do too. And so, it would fill up the days, fairly, fairly quickly. I-I don’t find myself running out of things to do or being bored ever. So, eventually in all that, writing comes back. Ya know. When I- Ya know, it depends on the situation. Like, I would re-charge my batteries first, and then see what came from it. Re-charging my batteries would probably include a little bit of down time

where I'm not really working on anything. Just like what I try to do on vacation. And when I return, or when I decide it's time, or when things come up . when they just sorta bubble up again - then I'm on my work again.

Here he makes a distinction between types, or experiences of time, along the divide of work and not work. He refers to the latter as encompassing several descriptors: as play, as relaxation, and as "recharging my batteries." In this category he specifically pinpoints nature, reading, socializing with family and friends, and watching the clouds. He uses the last activity as an example of a type of activity he would enjoy, but that he suspects would seem a "time-waster" to other people.

Much like the Young Mother who looks forward to the weekends as a time to recharge before the start of another week, the Forever Explorer uses these examples as one that would provide for the recharging that would allow him to gear back into work. In implying writing as a part of his work, he illuminates that ability of "work" to coincide with the notion of fulfilling time. His example, as well as many other professors and students, specifically highlights the ability of intellectual work to merit the label of a quality time experience.

He additionally pinpoints other activities, namely exercise and physical activity, that are a part of his reality that he would choose to maintain in this ideal realm. Within these divisions, he suggests a sense of balance, one that is present in his other observations as well, such as the perception of play and spontaneity as necessary to offset the rigidity of work and school.

The Poetic Agent (49)

For the Poetic Agent, losing touch with the passing of time is a characteristic of his "sacred time" experience. Considered in detail earlier, it is one he specifically attaches to two contexts: the scenario of nature as well as the activity of creative writing. This pair provides further intrigue in also appearing as the two central themes for the previously considered Forever Explorer. The Poetic Agent finds the two quite complementary. In touch with the originally religious implications of the term, he particularly seeks

to reserve sacred time during prominent Jewish holidays. On these occasions he will often rent a cabin in the woods where he will spend a few days. He most often goes by himself. While every once awhile his (long-distance) partner will come along as well, he says that in this scenario they will have a routine where they spend time together during the day, but in the evenings he works on his writing while she pursues her own activities. He also refers to time spent in nature as “selfless time” to describe a feeling of connection, or of being “most at home in yourself.”

In terms of writing providing an experience beyond time, a quote partially considered earlier is worth repeating in which he describes the feeling he gets from writing:

I mean, I feel differently. And this is one of the reasons why, like creative writing and academic writing, not just stylistically have a lot of tension between them. But you, *you experience the time differently*. I mean I always have, the academic writing, that task-oriented sense and all that. And the creative writing, I don't know what's going to happen. Uh, I-I know, that there is this something, that needs to be expressed; I'm not exactly sure how that's going to come out. And, I don't feel that I'm totally in control of that. And that's the interesting part of the creative writing . . . I don't feel that I'm writing things alone . . . I feel, that the, um, the product is being guided, in an interesting way . . . Um, it's amazing, actually, how, (*small laugh*) if you, if you had to add it up on a conventional clock - and this is that difference between sacred and profane time - probably, how little, physically measurable time I have spent writing creatively.

Here he describes the experience of losing himself in writing as one in which the writing feels to take on a path of its own. In this example, he aligns losing sense of control to losing sense of time. His depiction of writing as a “product being guided” implies a relation to his earlier quote about nature which expresses his appeal in providing a sense of feeling a part of something bigger than himself. In another interesting observation about writing and time, he aligns the latter as act of permanence:

That's where the writing experience ties up with time in another interesting way. That, that there are these particular observations, particular experiences, or, um, particular phrases occasionally, but usually is an embodied experience, that, um, clearly seems to call for some degree of greater permanence.

It is to the hypothetical situation of open-ended time, that he first asserts his firm belief in humans as free agents. Repeating part of a quote earlier cited in the discussion of boundaries and agency, to the question of how he would spend responsibility-free time he answered:

Uh, ya know, the funny thing is, I mean, when all is said and done, probably the same way I do it now. I think, fundamentally, really, when push comes to shove, deep down everybody really does spend time the way they want to. I mean, whether they'd like to confront that or not. The fundamental thing is, we are free agents . . . We are how we spend our time. It doesn't just say a lot about us, I mean, it fundamentally winds up . . . being us. We do have some choices.

Although in elaborating he explains that he excludes the scenario where people are struggling with poverty, he otherwise generally charges that each individual is in ultimate control of their time. As example, he offers his frustration in often hearing colleagues complain about not having enough time. For him, the solution is an easy one: if you are unhappy, "then change it, okay?" Where the first example zeroes in on a type of losing control, this example emphasizes its personal exercise.

Thus, for this professor, the significance he applies to temporal perception and particularly the emphasis on free will greatly underscores his temporal experience, shaping that which he might consider his version of quality time.

The Department Head (63)

At 63 years of age, the Department Head is the oldest male professor and the second oldest participant overall. He is the only with the dual role of department head. To the question of common scenes for losing track of time, he offers the specific activity of developing proposals, referring to a particularly recent experience:

I love putting those proposals together and working on them. And, that's one of those times where, um, I thought, okay, well I'll just stay here another hour . . . And I figured it'd be an hour, and literally, the next thing I knew, it was like ten o'clock at night. And I was finishing it up, but it was like ten o'clock at night. And, things like that, sometimes, you know, will happen. Usually it's in the midst of doing something along those lines. Like, when we were in Savannah this past

Saturday. When my team-project and I were working. You know we started at eight. Next thing we knew it was like one, and the only reason we realized it was one was because we started getting hungry, you know. And then, we ordered in some food, and the next thing we knew it was seven o'clock. I mean, it was just like one of those, sort of – Just into it, and working, and getting, you know, things that excited you intellect- excited me and them.

Although categorized under the primary activity of forming a proposal, several sub-themes appear in this description. The scene of a collaborative team effort towards the development of a research proposal most prominently highlights, and even integrates the themes of socialization and intellectual work. Like the academic pursuits of the students and the writing of the other professors, it is the researcher role of the Department Head which captures him in a seemingly timeless sequence of moments. Like many of the students, he specifies time spent with others, yet he is the only to mix work and socialization together. (Often work is emphasized as a solitary endeavor, and socialization, an antithesis to work).

In response to the open-ended time-scenario, he provides a fairly detailed account. Offering ideas for a variety of temporal increments, his many examples all revolve around travel:

Well, I mean , if I had a week, probably go somewhere. Or, stay home, and probably do something like read a novel. We, we do try to go out to- [my partner's] family has a cabin on a lake in Michigan, and we try to go up there every other year, for at least a week or two. And, that's what I do when I'm there. I don't do anything else but that. That's probably what I would do if I had, had a week, you know. A day, might do something – And I had done things like this, in strange times – but, I might just get up in the morning, and, get in the car and drive to Asheville, and spend two hours and drive home. Something along those lines . . . The kind of thing I might do if I had a month. Just, getting in the car, and just, going on a road trip would be the kind of thing I could see myself doing . . . When I was younger I would just take a couple of weeks where I would just go on a road trip. And those were fairly structured in the sense that I would get up in the morning and leave fairly early. Then, I would drive, and I would stop in some town around 2 or 3 in the afternoon, and just, check in to a motel or a hotel and just go around looking for local little museums, or libraries to go in and just look at and just see some new and interesting things. And go, and just visit my brother in Salt Lake, or in Tampa or something. That kind of thing . . . If I had a year. And, I'm actually contemplating a year right now, for when I'm done. If I had a year and enough money I might do something like take a trip around the world or something like that. Something along those lines . . . Lots of cool stuff to visit everyday. I mean, I'd want some place where you could do one of two things – You could either just sit at home and not do anything and read, or, say, oh, I'd like to go out and go visit this place within, you know . . . Travel would be a big part of it. Not likely to stay home.

Whether given an extra year, or a month, week, or even a day, he would choose travel in every case. From a day-trip to Asheville, a week in a Michigan cabin, to a month long road trip, to a year around the world, extra time for the Department Head means extra time to travel. Like the other two male professors, he does also make mention of vacationing in a natural setting. While the Poetic Agent rents a cabin in the woods for his sacred time and the Forever Explorer cherishes his family vacations to Montana as an opportunity for play and relaxation, the Department Head also suggests his time vacationing with his partner at a lakefront cabin in Michigan as relaxing in the simple opportunity to not have to do anything. He highlights his enjoyment of travel in two forms: as this ability to relax and read, or the opportunity to visit and see new things and places.

In regards to this emphasis on travel, his response is very similar to the Non-Tourist's. Like him, the Department Head also keeps his travels open to flexibility. The Department Head is even arguably further flexible in that his traveling is as much as part of his experience as that upon arriving at his destinations, meaning, his trips are likely to involve stopping at unscheduled locations on the way to "just go around looking" and "see some new and interesting things." His travels at a younger age were even more so similar to the Non-Tourist's in that they were most often undertaken alone, as he specifies elsewhere. In contrast, the Department Head's travels today often include his partner, and/or the company of colleagues in the scenario of work-related travel.

Of the group of four male professors, the most common themes were writing, travel, and nature. Three of the four specifically mentioned writing, and the fourth provided its implication. This group clearly distinguishes between the experiences of creative and academic writing. The Poetic Agent and the New Professor specifically emphasize the rewards of creative writing, with respective attention to poetry and fiction writing. The Forever Explorer speaks more generally of writing, implying that its lure encompasses various forms. While the Department Head does not directly highlight writing, he does hone in on the activity of developing research proposals, which do involve writing to some degree.

Travel is also mentioned by all four. While the Department Head most emphatically emphasizes travel, the New Professor also mentions the desire to travel the world. The Forever Explorer includes traveling to and vacationing in Montana as part of his quality time scenario. While the scenario of taking cabin trips is one for which the Poetic Agent emphasizes nature more so than travel, it is nonetheless still a component of that activity.

Three of the four mention the context of nature. The Forever Explorer and the Poetic Agent both emphasize that context as one encouraging of relaxation and losing oneself in the present moment. The Department Head also mentions the relaxing setting of a family cabin on the lake in Michigan, and also specifies the walks he often takes outside in the morning and evenings as particularly calming. Beyond the intrigue of their repeated mentions is that the examples of nature and writing are offered together for both the Forever Explorer and the Poetic Agent, suggesting potentially interesting parallels of this relationship with regard to time and place/space.

Resonant with the group of male students, the male professors also tend towards an emphasis on physical aspects of those scenarios. Much like the activities of the Builder, the New Professor pinpoints projects involving his hands (like the restoration of an old dresser) as activities tending to encourage his disregard for time. As illuminated by the Contradictive Learner within her own desire for travel, travel does also necessarily comprise a physical component. The Forever Explorer and the Poetic Agent also both emphasize the physical context of the natural world, relaying the importance of space, or place, to temporal experience. The Forever Explorer additionally mentions hiking, and the Poetic Agent even implies a type of tangibility in the activity of writing as an act of preservation. Thus, in overview, the activities most commonly mentioned by this group were writing and travel, with an emphasis (following the male students) on the physical aspects of these activities.

The Female Professors

The Young Professor (33)

Easily the most temporally stressed of the entire group, the Young Professor offers several scenarios of temporal unawareness. First on the list is the daily ritual/routine of talking to her long-distance partner over the phone in the evenings, but the list expands from there. She responded:

When I'm talking on the phone to him. Cause I literally will talk for like- *I'm gonna talk for like, half an hour. And that's when I know it's past 12:30 in the morning and we're still talking. And when I'm writing. I'll say I'm gonna write for an hour, and the next thing you know, I've written for like, hours. Or, when I'm writing in my journal. Journal writing and research writing. I can lose- I can write for hours and not realize how much time- hours have passed by. And I'm that way with books. I can get lost in a book. And, like I can read books beginning to end in one sitting, and not realize how much time has gone by . . . Or even when I'm having, um, like I also try to schedule in those times in the day when I actually get to talk to people. And, when I'm having coffee with a colleague, or a student, or lunch, I, I can- time will pass by really quickly. And I'll have to rush- get back to teach my class, because I have to do something else. So, um, I do like interacting more one-on-one, so when I'm doin that with colleagues, or students, that time does tend to fly.*

Thus, her list of examples covers: talking with her partner on the phone, writing in her journal or for research, reading, and interacting with people throughout the day. Following suit with emerging patterns throughout the quality time scenarios, she basically pinpoints three themes: socializing, reading, and writing. For the first, within the routinized busyness of her day she finds those moments of interacting with others as those in which she is not concerned with time. From the anchored phone chat with her partner every evening, to having lunch with a colleague or meeting a student for coffee, these moments perhaps function as a type of buffer against the burn-out that she fears. In terms of this interaction offering a measure of balance, she resembles the Young Mother for whom daily interaction with her two close friends provides a routine stress reliever. While the theme of socialization, particularly beyond family, appears more prevalently for the students (and particularly the female students), as the youngest professor she is the closest to the average age of the students.

Both reading and writing are common responses as well. Reading was specifically mentioned so far by the Department Head and the Contradictive Learner. In terms of writing, her response is shared by the Poetic Agent, the Forever Explorer, the New Professor and the Contradictive Learner (or, three male professors and one female student). When including academic research more generally, the group expands to also include the Department Head and the Graduate Student (yielding a total group include all four male professors, and two students).

To the question of a hypothetical scenario of open-ended time, she replied:

The day first – On the day, I'd probably sleep in, until like, 9 or 10. And then, probably, um . . I'd probably write. Cause I don't have that much time to write. Or scrapbook . . Yeah. I think I'd do okay for the first month. After that, I would have to have something. But, I think I need some kind of structure in my life. Even if I didn't impose it myself, I would do something . . . So I think I- I'm used to staying pretty busy. And so, usually when I go on, ya know, when I go on vacation, I just watch how I vacation . Cause, my brother and I, and my partner, have two very different vacation styles. Where I like to have a little itinerary and pick certain things – it drives both of them nuts. And they're just more spontaneous. I'm just not really spontaneous. So, I think I would be lost, having more than a month off. But, I think a month would be good. But like I said, after awhile, I need some kind of structure. It's just like, this day, what do I do on this day?

Her initial response is sleep. With the Young Mother as the other to initially answer with sleep, the Young Professor and the Young Mother represent a pair relatedly linked by their arguable status as the most hurried professor and student. As considered in temporal categories of ownership, these were also, relatedly, the two participants who emphasized the notion of a “my time” or “time for me.”

In this response, the Young Professor again mentions writing and also adds scrapbooking. Elsewhere she elaborates on scrapbooking as an activity she does for others. For birthdays and other occasions, she enjoys making commemorative scrapbooks as gifts for friends and family members. Although a predominantly solitary endeavor of creativity for this self-proclaimed introvert, its value is also based in its indirect connection with other people.

After these three brief mentions she moves into a lengthier explanation as to why she would ultimately need structure in her life. Almost in direct antithesis to the Forever Explorer's response based

in the spontaneity of play, the Young Professor describes her lack of spontaneity as that which, in addition to the ability to drive the people in her life nuts, also compels her towards regimented routines. Tangentially, the comparison between the Young Professor and the Forever Explorer is further interesting given that despite their extreme opposition, their ultimate conclusions to the question are not really that different. To recall, the Forever Explorer (also like the Poetic Agent) reports that he would ultimately change little to his daily and weekly routines, outside of maybe adding more vacation-esque type of time to the complete picture. Although the Young Professor does not state this specifically, her thought that, “after awhile, I need some kind of structure,” and choice of words in reporting she “would be lost, having more than a month off,” implies that she would want to maintain some forms of structure from her actual life as it stands in reality. Despite responding with opposing extremes on the scope of spontaneity, the response of the Young Professor and the Forever Explorer are nonetheless ultimately quite similar in both expressing the desire for little change to their standard routines.

As the professor expressing and exhibiting the greatest degree of busyness, a prime theme of her temporal experience is of her expressed desire to lessen its urgency. Particularly in response to her brother suffering an aneurism, she speaks of wanting to be successful at reformulating the alignment of her time with her values. She elaborates the aim as a goal:

Just to re-allocate the time where I’m over-preparing for stuff, into times where, I’m actually going to get some benefit from that time. And so, I benefit – I have never regretted not working and taking some time to do something for me. And so, and I have regretted not doing something for me and spending that time with work that did not actually get me this far. And, so – Cause if I don’t feel good about it at the end of the day, then, it’s just not working. And I actually take some of that time, and say, call my brother and see how he’s doing. Yeah. Or, I’ve never regretted writing in my journal. Or, I didn’t feel like, you know, ‘oh I missed grading a paper,’ because I went to somebody’s birthday party. (laughs) I don’t feel bad about those things. So, I should do more of those things I’m going to feel good about doing, and not the ones I’m gonna look back on and go like, you know, I could have finished grading those papers the next day. Instead of missing my friend’s little birthday get-together. So, that’s part of it. In a week, two weeks from now, if the stuff wouldn’t matter, then, it’s probably a waste of my time.

She highlights the values implied behind regret, finding she's never regretted talking to her brother, or writing in her journal, or going to a friends' birthday party. Yet, she has regretted the decision to prioritize grading papers and sacrifice the opportunity for such opportunities. Here again, she expresses the value she places upon both writing and socializing with those close to her. A rule she suggests in measuring the worth of her time, she concludes that if it would not matter to her in another two weeks, "then, it's probably a waste of my time." Yet, as a backdropped sentiment to her predominating temporal stresses (sacrificing sleep, working until exhaustion, etc.), her example exemplifies the challenge of translating words into action. Her desire to change could be re-cast as the desire to transition from a more quantified temporal experience to one more concerned with quality.

The Restless Creator (53)

The creative component of this narrator's namesake shines through in her response to these quality time scenarios. To the request for a description of temporal unawareness she answers with a response shared earlier, in describing her activity of card-making:

This is the thing that is so funny. I don't, really, sit still. And I gotta lotta aches and pains. I'm old and I've been dancing for a long time and I have arthritis and all this. But I'll cannn siiiii fooor eeevvver *[to indicate slowed, deliberately drawn out speech]*. I might, stretch and move and shift, but I will, I will pick out the sequins and the sparkles and I'll just stay there forever. Most of the time I will multi-task, when I'm doing other things. But there are a couple of things that it's just like, it completely absorbs me, and time goes *[makes soft noise]*, ya know, passes, and I have no idea. Yeah. It's one of those. I think it's an excellent thing . . . Ya know, my partner, on bad days, will disparagingly call me ADD. But, I think, I definitely, I can bounce from thing to thing – it – and part of that is the creativity. I just think the way I connect things is not . . . very linear, and, and pretty spacious.

She frames her response as an antithesis to her restlessness and "ADD"'d behavior. She specifically focuses on the activity of making cards as one that "completely absorbs me." Her description of picking out sequins and sparkles highlights the creative basis of this construction. In creating cards that she then sends to other people for birthdays, holidays, or other occasions, this activity of making cards is

much like the Young Professor's scrapbooking. Both activities are primarily creative activities with an indirect connection to others as recipients.

In response to the open-ended time scenario, she says, "I'd like to spend more time doing art things. Yeah. I think that would be, that would be what I would want." She goes on to specify that would also like to spend more time with "my own choreography" and flows into describing a project she was working on as part of a performance piece that she was booked to show locally within the upcoming months. This example again asserts her creative side, and is quite similar to the card-making she offers in the first scenario:

And I'm also – don't laugh – I'm making the floor, out of cork. I've been collecting one bazillion corks. And I'm making- I would love to just have time to just sit on my butt and just glue-gun my corks together. And, ya know, just start making the stuff that I want to be in the performance. Yep. Kinda like Pina Bausch, her work, it was very, impressionistic, and sometimes they danced in water, and they danced in dirt, and it's real perform- And I just thought, Pina Bausch died this past year, and I really honor her. And I thought, I want to make a cork- I want that. So, I mean, I'm- Basically I'm making it in tiles . . . Somebody's makin a cork chair, and some- We're doing things that - I have pictures, and we wanna make frames, and we're gonna have bottles, and I want people to put, like, messages that they want to go away, in the bottles. And, anyway, just, I wanna start doing that. I have a lot of work to do. And part of me just sort of drools about, oh I just wish I could sit on the floor and play with corks. But, I gotta grade papers. And so, ya know, that's kinda . delayed. But, when I do get some time . . .

In both she paints a scene of herself on the floor surrounded by material of construction in which she can find herself lost. Yet, here, instead of cards she is dealing with corks. The effort and end-product is also in this example a reflection of connection to others. In a very basic way, her construction of this floor connects her with others in that it serves a function for dancers who will be performing for an audience. Yet, perhaps even more significantly, the project itself was born from a desire to honor one of her inspirations. It is also worth mentioning that she notes having a few friends who are bartenders through whom she had been getting "installments of corks," and that she also expresses the desire to recruit others to help her with the project. In these ways, this primarily creative endeavor is also tinged with the characterization of connection and/or socialization with others. Thus, as the two characteristics

predominating in both examples, the themes of creative expression and socialization/connection with others shine brightest in her quality time scenarios.

The Retired Teacher (67)

To the question of being unaware of time, the Retired Teacher reports two primary scenarios. As an activity she has grown in appreciation for in her recent retirement, spending time with others is her first response. She offers the specific examples of having lunch or dinner with friends, attending concerts with a friend who shares her interest in music, and occasionally planning larger get-togethers with groups of friends outside the local area.

In addition to this time with others, she also reports losing sense of time while playing piano. Like spending time with friends, playing the piano is another activity she has (re)discovered upon retirement. She elaborated:

When I get into playing the piano. That, I pretty much go, get into a different zone. Yeah. So I don't think about the time, when I'm doing that. Because I'm very definitely into the music. Mm-hm . . . It's a, just sort of a different place where your brain gets. (*laughs*). It's, it's, not thinking about anything else. And that's one of the things that I always, I've always enjoyed about music. And, because it really transports me, to a totally different level of consciousness.

She is the only of the participants to respond to the quality time scenario with the practice of a musical instrument. Yet her description that it "transports me to a totally different level of consciousness" shares similar qualities with other themes. The description sounds similar to the experience of intellectual challenge reported by the others, like the brain exercise, deep thought, and meta-physical experiences offered by the students, and the engagement of writing as expressed by several professors. Perhaps most related is the experience of the Returning Student whose practice of vocals presents an opportunity for engagement and temporal unawareness.

Yet, beyond just intellectual challenge, practicing music also involves a physical element as well. Of further similarity, this example of playing the piano resembles the Graduate Student's description of a

meditative state as the result of running, and even to a degree, the inner stillness characterizing the 36-hour professor's experience with card-making. All of these examples share in the sentiment of feeling "absorbed," or so deeply engaged in the moment so as to lose the context of time's passing.

To the scenario of open-ended time, she responds with saying that she feels this hypothetical has become her reality since retirement. She expresses that with this feeling of discretion she has found the ability to "slow down," reporting the primary benefit as appreciating more throughout her day. As one example, she offers cooking as something which was once a chore, but that she now finds herself enjoying:

Yeah. I would definitely say that I do have that experience. And, it is a different kind of experience. And, it's, uh, it is kind of interesting to think about, 'Okay, let's see, I believe I will- I am gonna look through some recipes, or look at some other things,' you know. Even tonight, I, I'm fixin something I've never done before. But, I just found it. Went to the store and found the ingredients. So, you know, I, I probably wouldn't have done this some time ago.

Thus, in contrast with some of the more fantastic notions of world-travel or cross-country hitchhiking, she reports a more subtle drift in perception of those things already in her daily life. Of course, her daily life does differ from the other participants in that she is the only retiree, and the only to report feeling that she is living within a reality of the open-ended time scenario. As considered in further detail as a part of her re-orientation to "rest time," she also reports retirement extending her the opportunity to enjoy things like watching movies with her husband, reading mystery novels, and listening to music, in addition to spending time with friends and playing the piano.

Although a bit presumptuous to speak of themes across only three examples, those most common to this group are socialization/interaction and creativity. The Young Professor and the Retired Teacher specify spending time with others as a scenario of temporal disregard. The Young Professor implies an emphasized value on spending time with others in finding that she never regrets not grading papers to spend time with a friend or talk to her brother. The Retired Teacher reports an emphasized value on spending time with others in coming out on the other side of dealing with her health crisis.

Although indirectly, the 36-hour professor's card-making and corkboard projects both relate to making connections with other people.

All three of the female professors also offer examples which seem tied together by the characteristic of creativity. As mentioned, the activities of card-making, cork-floor-building, and scrapbooking share as methods of creative construction. Creativity is also a characteristic within the Young Professor's emphasis on writing and the Retired Teacher's example of playing piano. All activities express some form of artistry.

To conjure the entire group of professors, the comparison of the male and female professors finds similarity as well as difference. To recall, where the women generally highlighted the characterizations of socialization and creativity, the predominating themes of the men were writing, travel, and nature. These themes, however, are not entirely distinct. The theme most pervasive within the group of professors as a whole seems that of intellectual challenge. This is most blatant within the overlapping themes of writing and creativity. With three men directly mentioning writing and the fourth offering research, each of the men provides an example which fits into the theme of intellectual challenge. With one woman specifying writing, and all three offering some facet of creativity, all of the women provide examples of the theme as well. Thus, in encompassing the activities of writing, research, and creativity, the theme of intellectual challenge applies to every one of the seven professors in this sample.

In terms of difference between the groups of male and female professors, the themes of socialization and travel seem the greatest divergence between the two groups. While every female professor mentioned socialization as a part of their quality time scenarios, none of the male professors offered this activity directly. The Department Head comes closest in depicting collaboration with a team on a research project, but even in this scenario social interaction seems to play second tier. Similarly lopsidedly, where every male professor indicated traveling as an activity applicable to the quality time label, this theme did not appear for any of the women.

In considering the entire group of participants as whole, the themes which seem most prominent are socialization, challenge and achievement: intellectual and physical, and relaxation.

While the theme of relaxation was more prominent for the professors than the students, and was most emphasized by those also reporting the experience of temporal stress, it was nonetheless one of the more common descriptors to those quality time scenarios. From the Graduate Student's breaks, the Returning Student's "release" in singing, to the Young Mother's "me time," the Morning Owl's cartoons, and the Contradictive Learner and Sociologist in Waiting's socializations, the theme of relaxation played through many of the student narratives. Even more prominent with the professors, from the sanctuary of nature, endeavors of creativity, the exercise of spontaneity or play, to traveling, walking, and yoga, to name a few examples, the characterization of relaxation or stress-relief was expressed by the majority of the professors.

The theme of challenge and achievement was another wide-reaching descriptor, encompassing both intellectual and physical achievement. Although these two realms seem disparate in ways, the resounding characterization of achievement bound these examples together. As highlighted throughout the responses, the notion of physical achievement was most prominent in the responses of the males, both the students and professors. In stretching the definition to encompass that description articulated by the Contradictive Learner, the theme of travel which appeared in several descriptions and particularly by the male professors, could also add to the list of those included in this parameter. The consideration of challenge and achievement intellectually had an even greater presence throughout the quality time narratives. From the academic work of the students to the writing and research of the professors, to the creative endeavors offered by several professors, the notion of intellectual stimulation appeared in a majority of these descriptions.

The theme of socialization also ranked as one of the most recurrent themes. Within the group of students, while the theme of socialization is most prominent for the females, it is also one characteristic for the group as a whole. While four of four female students offer social interaction as a type of quality

time, so do three of the four male students. Suggesting further implications of gendered divide, three of the three female professors also mentioned social interactions. In contrast, emphasis on time alone tended to come from the males, with two male students (the Builder and the Non-Tourist) and two male professors (the Poetic Agent and the Department Head) specifying appreciation for time spent alone. Only one female, the Young Mother, specified time alone as particularly valuable. Yet, despite its relatively lacking mention for the male professors, social interaction still represents one of the most common mentions.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ This pool is further great when including its implications for the male professors as considered as a part of their boundary setting, as further detailed in the section on boundaries and agency.

CHAPTER V

THE CONCLUSION

Despite feeling that i have in many ways over-extended my investigation into the notion of subjective temporality, the remaining list of unrealized intentions argues against a conclusion at this point. So much seems left unsaid. Yet, in recognition for the necessity of an end, my anxiety about incompleteness is partially assuaged in accepting the amplified description of this as an evolvingly exploratory study.

At the beginning of this project, during the literature review stages, I developed several sets of research questions that I anticipated would guide the direction of this study (pages 53, 56, 62). This roadmap crystalizes the wide divergence between intention and outcome.

To distill my intentions into an abbreviated statement: I had intended to pursue an exploration into the idea of a “subjective experience of time,” using quality time as a focus and the lens of generational change. I felt that a comparison based upon generation might at least hint at a significantly pivotal shift of temporal perception across the past 60 years. In using groups of professors and students, I additionally sought insight specific to the relationships between time and the context of higher education.

The development of the study did follow these lines of intention. I crafted my interview protocol around the notion of quality time, and though not exactly along my ideal parameters, i was at least able to recruit two groups roughly along a generational divide. I also developed an accordantly focused coding scheme, additionally incorporating factors of relevance as considered in the literature review. However, it was in the construction of analyses where intent and outcome began to part ways.

In compiling, comparing, and contrasting the emergent themes - much like the sentiment expressed by several interviewees of their own experience with research and writing - the topics began to

insist upon their own shape of a puzzle. While many of the themes I had expected to consider: busyness, technology, physical and mental health, social interaction, and of course, quality time, did yield merit, so did others that I had not specifically expected.

Although I had considered the way that time is talked about in the literature review, especially in regards to the significance of the term, “quality time,” I had not intended such a detailed look into the vocabulary used by participants. While I went into the interview process with the goal of avoiding my own usage of “temporal terminology” as a means to minimize bias or guiding the interview, I had not expected the temporal terms offered by the participants to provide such a rich source of information about these individuals’ temporal experiences. While it is a cultural curiosity that we speak of time as something to be controlled or owned or used, I did not expect the over-excessive use of a seemingly culturally generic term like “my time” to say so much about the individual’s experience. I did not foresee that a concept like rest time or play time could reveal so much about one’s personality, and even perspective in life. I did not expect the prevalence of temporally-related identifications such as “ADD” or “Type A,” nor their significance to personal temporalities. Although under the header, “vocabulary of time,” this section unexpectedly offers as much insight into these participants’ quality time as that section devoted to that topic.

From here, while the vocabulary of time seemed a logical starting place, “the experience of time” just seemed to fall into place as the next topic. First was the prominent issue of agency and boundaries. These topics had not been intended as focal points, which now almost seems silly based on how blatantly enmeshed these factors are to the experience of time. These issues dominated interview after interview, asserting their own entangled relationship. It was from within this dominance that the intended comparative lens became totally reconfigured. Within these themes, the difference between the responses as based upon gender, particularly between the male and female professors, became too blatant to pass over. Thus, the originally intended comparison of generations, which ultimately found less grounding as blurred by differences largely stemming from age or life stage, became supplanted with the

more dominant divide between gender. As heavily linked, the following section on time and health followed suit in the framework of a gendered divide between an active versus a passive stance towards time.

Although not delivered as such, retrospectively, the concluding topic of that section concerning time and technology seemed the closest commentary on a truly generational divide. Yet, instead of two clearly divided groups, the contrasts presented here suggest more of a continuum. While for some, the facet of technology was less relevant, two groups at seemingly opposite ends emerged from the student and professor groups respectively. Generally speaking, where those on the older end of the age spectrum tended to minimize or even avoid the use of technological tools, many on the younger end expressed such devices as central to their daily lives. However, a gray area in the middle also seems present, especially with the two youngest professors who seem to provide a transitional group in sharing qualities from both ends.

As examples from the former group, the Retired Teacher expresses her aversion to the computer, the Department Head expresses the effort to keep his computer usage to a minimum at home, and the Forever Explorer specifies activities like hiking or spending time in nature as a means to momentarily leave technology behind. Examples from the younger end, the Contradictive Learner finds her daily life revolved around the internet and the Returning Student expresses feeling he would be at a loss without his i-phone. Seemingly in the middle of a divide, the Young Professor and the New Professor both express an intense draw towards technology, yet they both also convey its potentially problematic nature.

Several of the professors specifically comment on their concern for the increasing dependency on technological tools by the younger generations they see in the classroom. The Retired Teacher, the Forever Explorer, and even the Young Professor specify the use of technological tools by students as not only disruptive in the classroom, but imply disruption in an even greater sense. They each describe a sense of concern for an increasing expectation for instantaneity, and at the cost of attentiveness and

engagement. The Forever Explorer's description is most poignant in this sense, in his articulating the worry of technology eroding what he considers "play time" or "imaginative time," or simply, spontaneity. A class project he regularly assigns, his description of a "media fast" assignment provides a particularly poignant example.

The relationship between time and the context of higher education was another rife with untapped implications. Although unfortunately another topic not given its intended due, its significance is interwoven into many of the narratives. Of particular highlight is the perpetual busyness inherent to the pursuit of tenure as expressed by several professors, and perhaps most disturbingly, the lack of challenge offered to some of the students, particularly the Contradictive Learner and the Sociologist in Waiting, as potentially indicated as by-product as a context geared towards quantity over quality.

Thus, all in all, although the originally intended research questions did not exactly end up structuring the framework of this study as it unfolded, pieces of their significance are scattered throughout the metamorphosis of topics and sub-topics. While not front and center, implications of the originally intended focal points of generations and higher education are still, nonetheless, found throughout. Although it is given its own section of narration, the notion of quality time also finds underlying connection throughout the variety of topics considered. Yet, of seemingly greater importance is that the flexibility afforded in following the significance of pathways as they emerged perhaps pointed to themes of greater relevance to the topic. The issues of agency, boundaries, and gender particularly assert the promise of insight for further consideration.

It is my humble hope that the bulk of these words and ideas provides some dots worth connecting, some constellations worth imagining. If these pages might provide a few stepping stones in the direction of furthered consideration, or even just a spark of curiosity, this endeavor will represent a value beyond what I could ask.

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